

SUMMER, 1953

RELIGION IN LIFE

Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

A Christian Quarterly

OF OPINION AND DISCUSSION

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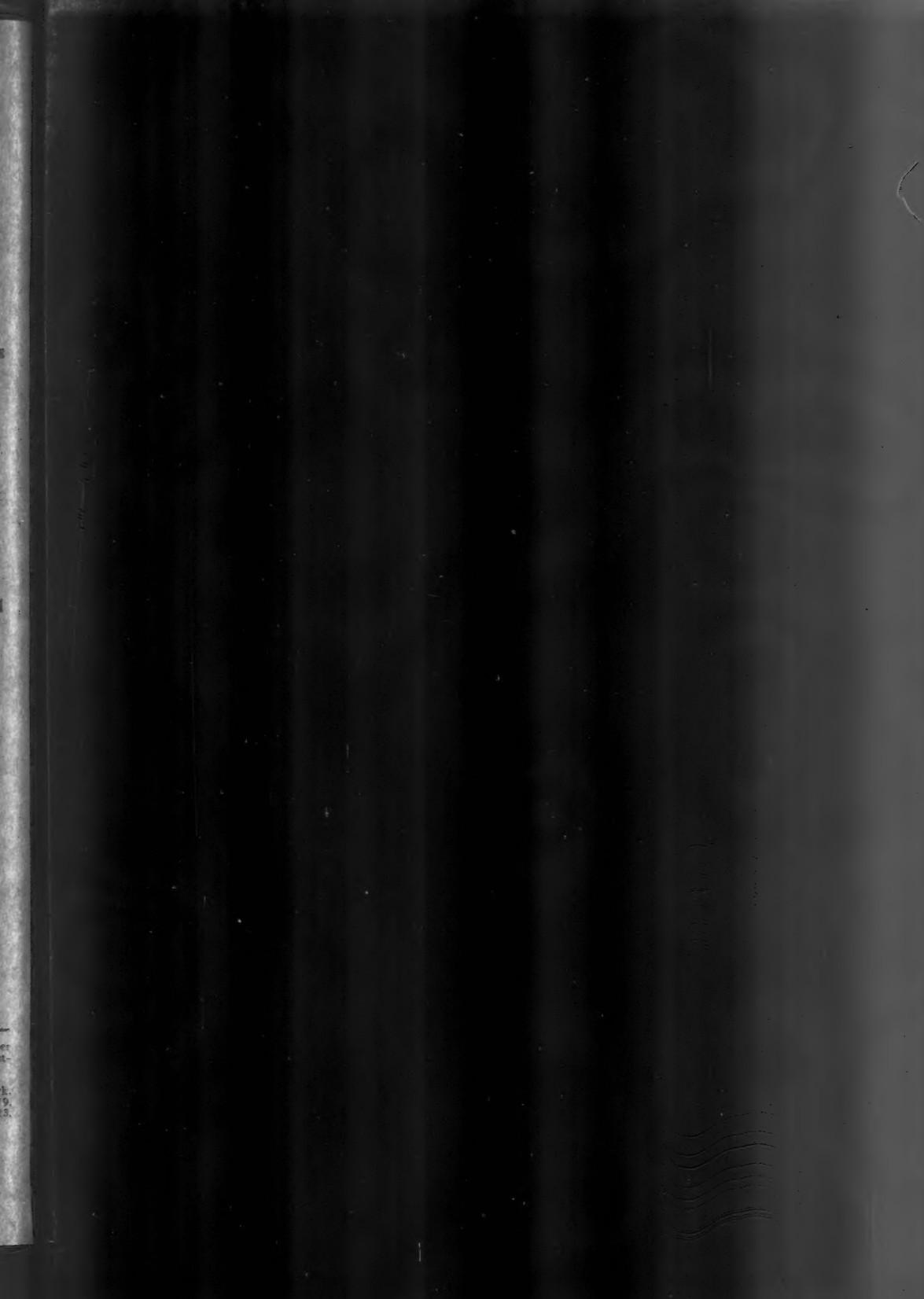
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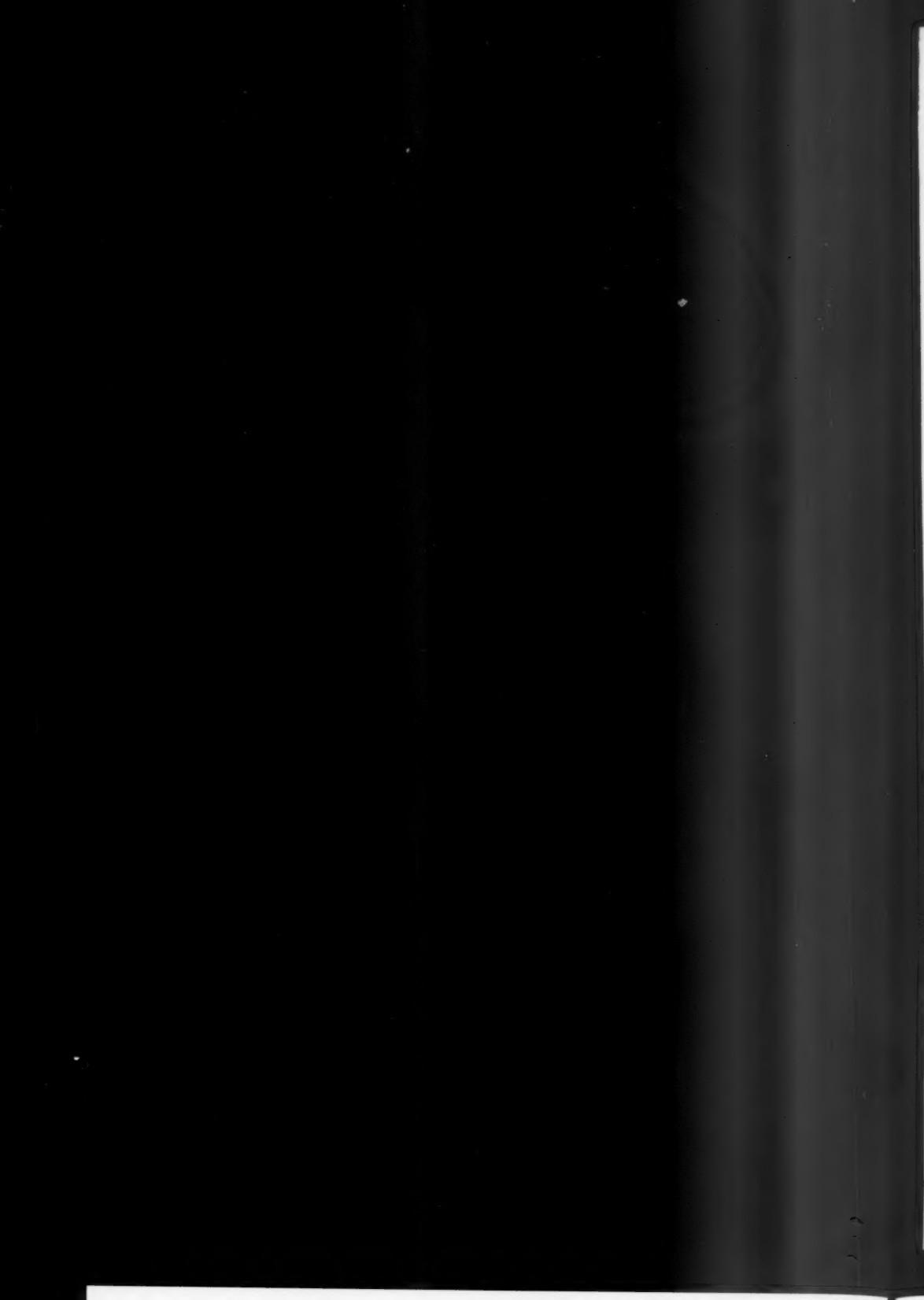
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Religion in Life is published quarterly by Abingdon-Cokesbury Press at \$1.25 per copy. Subscription price, \$4.00 per year in the United States and possessions and Mexico; Canada, postage 15 cents per year additional; other foreign postage 30 cents per year additional.

Publication office, 310 Broadway, Nashville 2, Tennessee. Editorial office, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York 11, New York. Entered as Second Class Matter, August 26, 1942, at the post office in Nashville, Tennessee, under Act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided in Section 1103, Act of Oct. 3, 1917, authorized March 16, 1923.





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"The Names of Jesus"

VINCENT TAYLOR

". . . When St. Paul says that 'in the fullness of the time God sent forth his Son' (Gal. iv. 4), we have passed far beyond the idea of a divinely commissioned national deliverer to the thought of One who comes to our world from the depths of the being of God. When we attempt to say just how much is to be read into this terminology we are baffled; but the reason is undoubted. . . . A man revered, loved, and worshipped is described by a terminology which bends and cracks under the strain, because it is being used to describe a unique person, and therefore to serve an end for which, humanly speaking, it was not intended from the standpoint of its history.

"Divinity is felt before it is named, and when it is named the words are inadequate. And this situation obtains throughout the long history of Christology. First the perception, then the halting words, and then the despairing attempt to find better words. When at length the decisive word of Nicaea is spoken, all we can say is that this is the best that men can do. And if it should be given to modern theology to speak better words, more accordant with the thought of our time, we may be sure that our constructions will run but lamely after a knowledge of Christ which antiquates them almost before they are framed.

"Christology is the despairing attempt of theologians to keep pace with the Church's apprehension of Christ. It is a discipline from which there is no discharge, even though it appears to the historian like the task of Sisyphus rolling up the mountain a great stone which inevitably falls back. The difference is that the theologian is not a solitary figure. Behind him lie the affirmations of the Church and the voices of countless Christian believers. He may therefore believe that, when the stone eludes his grasp, other hands will catch it, and that every age will know better who Christ is, even if the final utterance is reserved for the song of the redeemed."

—*The Names of Jesus*, pp. 70-71. New York:
St. Martin's Press, 1953. Used by permission.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Four Contemporary Views

From W. NORMAN PITTINGER

I WOULD ENTITLE this essay "An Anglican View," but not "*The Anglican View*," because it would be improper to seem to commit the entire Anglican communion to notions which are perhaps peculiar to the author. Certainly there is agreement among Anglicans as to the major emphases in the Lord's Supper, insofar as these are expressed in the liturgical formulae found in the Book of Common Prayer. On the other hand, there are different emphases within the communion, both as to the way in which the Eucharist is to be understood as sacrifice and also in regard to the mode of Christ's presence in this Sacrament. It is this diversity within a greater unity which is, in fact, the genius of the Church to which the writer belongs; not only on the Eucharist but on many other highly important matters, we welcome such variations while we rejoice in the over-all unity which the Prayer Book provides.

Yet it should not be thought that there is an enormous gulf between "high churchmen" and "low churchmen" on these points. One of the remarkable and, to some, surprising aspects of the matter is that when Episcopalian get underneath the traditional theological language, they discover that they are much more in agreement than might have been believed. If one may be personal here, it is worth remarking that the authors' committee of the Division of Christian Education (set up a few years ago to produce a statement of the position of the Episcopal Church in the form of a series of books known as "*The Teaching of the Church*") did not have any fundamental disagreements, once it had spent considerable time in exploring what different schools mean by what they say. And in the treatment of the Holy Communion, which forms part of one chapter in *The Faith of the Church* (the third volume in "*The Teaching of the Church*"), there was immediate agreement by the committee, despite the fact that the members were drawn from every part of the Episcopal Church. As a member of the committee and co-author of this volume, I can testify to this remarkable agreement; and I am emboldened to say that the idea,

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commonly held among non-Episcopalians, that the Episcopal Church is badly split on this question, is entirely erroneous.

What I shall attempt in this essay is, first, to state the view which is found in the volume, *The Faith of the Church*; second, to offer my own interpretation of this view; and third, to discuss the Eucharist in the context of ecumenical relations and understanding. A final preliminary word should be said: the writer is himself, both by upbringing and by conviction, on the "high church" or "Catholic" side of the Anglican synthesis, while at the same time he would probably be classified by many as a "liberal" or, if the term be allowed, "modernist" Catholic—using those words, of course, in the peculiarly Anglican and not in the "liberal Protestant" sense. The reader should therefore make allowances, in the two latter sections of this paper, for that particular bias.

I

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion was instituted by Christ as "a pledge of his love, and for the continual remembrance of his death, to our great and endless comfort."¹ Or, in another phrase, it was ordained "for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby."² In the Sacrament, Christ is "our spiritual food and sustenance."³ As it is celebrated and received "in remembrance of his meritorious Cross and Passion," the communicants "obtain remission of [their] sins, and are made partakers of the Kingdom of heaven."⁴ Furthermore, in this "continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ," the primary importance attaches to the action of the Church in taking, blessing, breaking and giving, rather than in any mental reverie, for "we do celebrate and make . . . before [God's] Divine Majesty, with these [his] holy gifts, which we now offer unto [him], the memorial Christ hath commanded us to make, having in remembrance his blessed Passion and precious Death, his mighty Resurrection and glorious Ascension; rendering unto [God] most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same."⁵

A quotation from *The Faith of the Church* will make the meaning clear:

Men who have glimpsed, if for a moment, the unutterable holiness and majesty of the living God; men who have known, if for a moment, the depths of their own sinfulness, weakness, and shame; men who have understood, if for a moment, their terrible need of redemption—men, everywhere and at every time, have sought to offer to God something which would in some way atone for their sin and reconcile them

¹ *The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 86.

² *Ibid.*, p. 293.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 80-81.

to God. In a way, that is the story of the human race: the search for some offering which will be acceptable to God. But this is a futile search. Man cannot find an offering acceptable to God. But that which man could not find God himself has provided. What is it? It is a human life, the true human life poured out in death, given in perfect love and obedience to God. It is the Lord Jesus, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.

The Church, therefore, offers to God the memorial which Christ commanded. By his death on Calvary, he made the "one full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world." The Church, on its part, in the Eucharist offers this "our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving." It is an action, something which is done, following our Lord's command, "Do this in remembrance of me." The Christian way of remembering our Lord's redeeming work is not only by thinking about it or turning back to it in mind, but also by repeating an action—taking, breaking, blessing, giving, as Christ did at the Last Supper in the Upper Room in the night in which he was betrayed. This action is set in the context of a great thanksgiving to God for his redemption of men through his incarnate Son. . . . The Eucharist . . . is a living remembrance in which [Christ] comes to us with all his redemptive power. That means that he is himself present as the Eucharist is celebrated.

The manner in which Christ is present and communicates himself to his people in the Holy Communion has never been precisely defined by the Anglican Churches, although the certainty and reality of his presence have been strongly affirmed. Anglicanism accepts Christ's promise that the communicant is made a sharer in the very life of Christ himself present in the Eucharist. By receiving Christ in the sacramental action, he is enabled to live in Christ as Christ lives in him. The Prayer Book tells us that "the inward part, or thing signified by the Bread and Wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received," is "the Body and Blood of Christ, which are spiritually taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper." In consequence of this, those who are partakers of the Lord's Supper receive through Holy Communion the strengthening and refreshing of their souls "by the Body and Blood of Christ, as their bodies are strengthened and refreshed by the Bread and Wine."⁶

These words state briefly, and for the most part in the language of the Prayer Book, the agreed view of the Lord's Supper in the Episcopal Church. It will be seen that five elements are involved:

1. The Sacrament is a Eucharist or thanksgiving. Its setting is a gratitude to God for the redemption wrought in Christ. Through the Sacrament the Christian Church gives its praise to God in a joyful feast. The idea that the Holy Communion is a "sad" service is mistaken; it is indeed a solemn rite, but its dominant note is exultant praise for God's mighty act in Christ.

2. The Eucharist is a memorial action. It is a "remembrance" of Christ's work as it was summed up on Calvary and released in the Resurrection. But the significance of terms such as these must be understood. Memorial and remembrance do not mean, in the eucharistic context, a turn-

⁶ Pike, J. A., and Pittenger, W. Norman, *The Faith of the Church*. New York: National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 1951, pp. 152-154.

ing back in reverie; they mean, rather, a making-present, through the action of the Holy Spirit, of the reality of that which was done in Palestine through Christ's passion, death, and resurrection. This notion of memorial or remembrance, interpreted in this sense, is both profoundly scriptural and patristic, and also—for Anglicans this is significant—it is the idea found in the great Caroline divines who wrote of the "sacrifice of commemoration."

3. The Eucharist has a sacrificial nature. This may be interpreted in various ways, and the writer will offer one theory below, but it is an essential element in the total meaning of the rite. It involves the offering of "ourselves, our souls and bodies"; the offering of the total life of the world (both of nature and history) as symbolized in the elements of bread and wine and their association with Christ; the offering of the Church itself in obedience and surrender to God; and the offering of Christ himself, in that he through this sacramental action makes available to his people the sacrifice which he offered once for all on Calvary. By his grace we are united in the Holy Spirit with his self-oblation; incorporated in that self-oblation, he offers us to God as members of his mystical Body.

4. In the Eucharist Christ is himself present, both in the totality of the action and in the hearts of his faithful people, and also through the instrumentality of the consecrated species. Theories as to mode may differ; the fact of his presence is clear.

5. By participation in the eucharistic action and by faithful reception of the "spiritual food of Christ's Body and Blood," the believer enters into communion with God in Christ, receives the food which strengthens and refreshes his soul, and is also brought into communion with his fellow men since they too are incorporated into Christ.

All this has been admirably summed up in a hymn, beloved of Episcopilians of all "schools," which has long had a place in the Hymnal:

And now, O Father, mindful of the love
 That bought us, once for all, on Calvary's tree,
 And having with us him that pleads above,
 We here present, we here spread forth to thee,
 That only offering perfect in thine eyes,
 The one true, pure, immortal sacrifice.
 Look, Father, look on his anointed face,
 And only look on us as found in him;
 Look not on our misusings of thy grace,
 Our prayer so languid and our faith so dim;
 For lo! between our sins and their reward
 We set the passion of thy Son our Lord.⁷

⁷ William Bright, 1874.

II

We have now given a brief, and necessarily incomplete, statement of what might be termed "the agreed position" of Anglicans concerning the meaning of the Eucharist. Our second head is a discussion of the theology of this Sacrament, from the writer's own position.

The Eucharist is the central action of the Christian Church. It has this central place, not only because of its institution by Christ (in whatever sense this phrase may be interpreted), but also because in it is summed up the whole Christian reality. "In this Sacrament the entirety of our salvation is comprehended," wrote St. Thomas Aquinas. It is an action in which God the Father, Creative Source, is worshiped through the Eternal Son, Reality Self-expressive, as he becomes incarnate, lives, suffers, dies, and rises again "for us men and for our salvation"; and it is an action by the operation of the Holy Spirit, God Responsive, taking the things of creation and returning them to the Father through Christ. The Eucharist is a trinitarian sacrament—and this characteristic must be safeguarded lest it degenerate into nothing more than a means of communion with Jesus our Lord. It is indeed such a means of communion, but this must be set within the larger whole of the entire "work of redemption" and also the "work of creation."

Furthermore, the Eucharist expresses the nature of the Church itself. It is the Sacrament of the Church's unity as the Body of Christ—the "outward and visible" sign of the "inward and spiritual" reality of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church which is Christ's Body and the new creation. Such a conception explains the insistence upon a duly ordained minister as the celebrant of the Sacrament; the Eucharist is no private devotional exercise but the Church's action, hence the minister of it must be one who is authorized to act for the whole Church. From the writer's point of view, this would imply that the proper minister of the Eucharist is one who has been ordained in such a fashion that his authorization is recognized by all Christendom, both historically and contemporaneously. Our Anglican way of insuring this is by restricting the celebration of the Eucharist in our churches to those who have "episcopal ordination or consecration."

This, of course, opens another question which it is not the purpose of the present paper to discuss. It must, however, be said that nobody in his senses, and with due regard to the nature of God revealed in Christ, would think that sacramental rites which are not episcopally authorized, in the historic succession, are bare of meaning and without grace. They may be invalid in the strictly technical sense that they do not have the minister

(and sometimes not the form) which has been historically employed as guarantee of their proper meaning; but they convey grace to those who are in faith and repentance and (so far, at least, as this writer is able to see) they convey all that the faithful communicant and worshiper believes them to give. No ministry can bind God, although on the other hand it is our conviction that we ourselves are bound by that which the Holy Spirit has led the Church to accept and use as ministerial instruments of his grace.

The Eucharist, which is an action set in the context of a thanksgiving to God for his redemptive work, is a sacrifice. But it is a sacrifice in what may seem to some a subtle sense. Obviously it is not a "bloody" sacrifice; equally obviously, on Christian grounds, it is not a repetition of nor supplement to the perfect and complete oblation of Christ on Calvary. The Articles of Religion have an admirable insistence on this point. However, insofar as the Church is the Body of Christ whose head is the Lord and whose informing life is the Holy Spirit, we may say that the Eucharist is the Church's continuing entrance into the "one oblation of himself once offered" on Calvary. Or, to put it in another way, Christ himself, as the High Priest, offers himself in and with his members who make up his Body. By their assistance at this action and their reception of the "spiritual food of the Body and Blood of Christ," those members, through the priest who represents the High Priest and also represents the priestly Body (and he is doing both simultaneously), make a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to God the Father. So the Eucharist is rightly termed "the Holy Sacrifice"; so the table upon which it is celebrated may be called an "altar"; so the minister who celebrates it is properly described as a priest. Yet it should be remembered that his priesthood is derivative and representative, a "ministerial priesthood" as Moberly put it, both for the Lord and for his priestly Body the Church.

It is only in the setting of this sacrificial action that we can understand the meaning of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. The term "real presence" is correctly used to describe that presence, but this term is susceptible of two meanings. One, *praesentia realis* ("real presence" strictly speaking), is simply a way of maintaining that there is a genuine presence of Christ. The other, *praesentia rei* ("presence of the reality" or of "Christ's body and blood"), is a way of stating that the true *humanity* of Jesus Christ is present in his "body and blood." The latter idea is often misunderstood. Its meaning may perhaps be stated by phrasing the truth in this way: "the whole Christ in the integrity of his human as of his divine nature is present in this Sacrament."

If the writer may quote himself at this point, we may say:

It has often been pointed out that the "body" is the effective instrument of self-expression . . . and to the ancient Jewish people, "blood" meant "life offered to the point of death." . . . The risen humanity of Christ is his self-expressive instrument. Life, true manhood, expressed in human flesh and blood during the days of Christ in Palestine, is the same life, true manhood, that is expressed in risen humanity or "spiritual flesh and blood." . . .

In the Eucharist, bread and wine [are] taken by God and made to serve the purposes for which God intends them: that is, to be the *organon* or instrumental vehicle by which the humanity of Jesus, risen and triumphant, is made present and available to his members in the Church. . . . The bread and wine remain bread and wine, but are now put into the new sphere of operation that God has established for them; they serve, in St. Augustine's words, as *signa sacra*, by which the presence of Christ is made possible in his humanity as holy food for men's nourishment. . . . No one "makes God"; God gives himself—or rather, the Lord Jesus Christ gives his humanity under bread and wine, and with his humanity gives his whole person.⁸

The view which is here advocated might be called instrumentalism; it is in line with a whole theology, especially in the Christological field, which might be developed at some length. God is where he acts. He acts in the humanity conceived and born of Mary, acts in an intensive and definitive sense; he also acts, for the purposes indicated above, in the eucharistic action, and there he acts in terms of that same humanity which was the means of man's redemption, applying that redemption to his faithful people as they are brought into his continuing life.

It is the writer's conviction that some such theory, expressed in this or similar terms, would win the assent of most Anglicans. In fact, variations of it are associated with the names of William Temple, Oliver Quick, Will Spens and others, and the statement of the meaning of the Eucharist in the famous *Report on Doctrine in the Church of England* has remarkable resemblances to it, while the appended notes on the subject prepared by individual members of the Doctrinal Commission state it quite explicitly. On the other hand, it cannot claim to be official teaching. Official teaching is that which we have already cited from the Prayer Book; and on the question of the meaning of the presence of Christ, the words attributed to Queen Elizabeth probably state the main Anglican emphasis, with a typical Anglican agnosticism as to mode:

He was the Word that spake it;
He took the bread and brake it;
And what his word did make it
That I believe and take it.

⁸ Pittenger, W. N., *The Christian Sacrifice*. Oxford University Press, 1951, pp. 151-157.

Once again, the reality of the presence is stressed, but the way in which the presence is effected and the mode of the presence itself are left for reverent speculation by those who wish to engage in it.

III

The third section of this essay is to deal with ecumenical problems. This is the most difficult section of all, since there is no fully agreed Anglican position here and each man must speak for himself, always within the limits of loyalty to the explicit teaching of the Church as found in the Book of Common Prayer.

For the question of intercommunion, however, the House of Bishops has now given authoritative guidance for Episcopalians at its meeting in 1952 in Boston. I quote from the bishops' statement "regarding Holy Communion at ecumenical gatherings":

We must recognize that in the ecumenical movement we are confronted by new problems and relationships with which the Rubrics and Canons of our Church have not been primarily concerned. In determining our course we must weigh together the precious values in our own inheritance which we must seek to guard and our calling to give expression to our shared life in Christ with brothers of other traditions wherever it is found in sincerity and truth.

There may well be times, at gatherings for a responsible ecumenical purpose, when a bishop of our Church within whose jurisdiction the meeting occurs will decide that for a particular occasion an invitation may properly be issued to all baptized communicant members of other Churches present to receive the Holy Communion at our Prayer Book celebration. As is recognized increasingly in the higher levels of the ecumenical movement, it is particularly important that on such occasions proper preparation for and interpretation of the sacrament shall be provided, with special emphasis on the note of penitence for our separation from each other. We are agreed that such an exception to our normal rule may properly be made by a bishop in his own diocese, where the general principles of this statement are understood.

We recognize that there will be times at such ecumenical meetings when members of our Church will be invited to receive Holy Communion at services of other Christian bodies. We do not generally encourage this participation. There may be members of our Church who in ecumenical settings and in accordance with their own individual consciences will receive Holy Communion in non-Episcopal services. They must realize that under the circumstances they are acting upon their own responsibility and are not committing their Church.

In making their decisions we hope that members of our Church will remember that we shall not have unity by wishing for it, but only by honestly and painfully facing the facts and the causes of disunity and solving them together in a straightforward way. The unity of our own Church family in this whole process is, we feel, an essential preliminary. If we, as individuals, are impatient with the limitations which disunity imposes on us, it is good that we should be impatient, and even better that we should remember our Lord's pain at our disunity and work all the harder to reach that agreement in mind and will which will make one communion and fellowship possible.

With this statement the writer is in hearty accord. But there are some questions which arise from it, and indeed from the whole ecumenical enterprise, which should be explored more fully.

First, what of the validity of non-Episcopal sacraments? My own view has been indicated earlier and there is little to add. That God both blesses and uses such sacraments to strengthen his people, and that he gives them (through these rites) that which they in faith expect, would seem to be an inevitable consequence of the Christian doctrine of God as he has revealed himself in Christ. Terms like validity, regularity, efficacy and the like have meaning only in their proper theological context; they should not be taken as ways in which God's grace is circumscribed.

Loyalty to the authority of the Church, however, makes it impossible to engage in "individualistic" actions which are not authorized by the proper officials of the Church. Non-Anglicans often do not understand this attitude; nor do they always see that Anglicans suffer terrible agony of spirit precisely because they feel obliged to obey authority in this matter rather than follow their own personal preferences. I can myself testify to this anguish when I have felt obliged, by loyalty, to abstain from communion with those whom I love and whom I recognize as brothers in Christ.

The clue to this attitude, it should be seen, is concern for the meaning of the Eucharist as the sacrament of the Church's given unity—and that means something more profound than one's perhaps sentimental sense of a spiritual union with others. It means, in fact, that kind of unity which can only come when we are all truly at one in faith, in ministry, in the life in grace. And alas! such is not true today. The bishops have authorized occasional intercommunion, and rightly; they have not envisaged, nor could they, immediate and complete intercommunion, for that must wait until we are truly in agreement in the fundamental things concerning the total Christian reality.

But this does not prevent our being present at, and learning deeply from, the sacramental practice of "our separated brethren." Nor does it prevent their learning from what we believe, under God, is our own heritage. Indeed it is in this way, perhaps, that we shall advance most surely, even if less swiftly. St. Augustine, in a very different context, once remarked that a limping man going slowly on the right road will reach his destination more certainly than a man going swiftly on the wrong road. That is my own feeling when I hear those who advocate immediate and unconditional intercommunion among all Christians.

Further, the deepening interest in eucharistic worship and the steadily

increasing emphasis on the Sacrament among non-Anglicans embolden me to hope that much which has been said in this paper will soon be shared by them, while Anglicans will have learned to see more profoundly into values which the other traditions maintain.

In conclusion, the writer feels impelled to say, for himself, that his initial doubts and questions concerning the South India scheme have been largely allayed (especially through a study of Dr. Rawlinson's recent book on the subject)⁹; and while there are still elements in that plan which seem to be unfortunate and in certain instances dangerous, he is for himself sure that it is along this line, with the safeguards which it provides for conscience, that our best hope for the future lies. Such a conviction is not likely to make one popular with "extremists"; but it is based upon the sure belief that God governs his Church and that he will not permit her to be led into grievous error if she seeks always to be responsive to his guidance while at the same time she ventures bravely in his name and for the sake of his human children.

⁹ Rowlinson, A. E., *Problems of Reunion*. London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1952.

From Henry Sloane Coffin

I HAVE BEEN ASKED to take part in this discussion in order to present my views as a Presbyterian. It has seemed best, therefore, to give an account, with some documentation, of the official Presbyterian position—which happens also to be my own.

I

The doctrine of the Supper of the Lord in the theology of the Presbyterian and Reformed tradition stresses first and foremost the objective presence of the living Christ, who meets his people at his table—himself the Host and the Feast, *Hospes atque Epulum*. It is not primarily a memorial feast. We do not *remember* a present Friend. Memory plays its role, for it is through the figure of the Lord handed down in the recollections of the first believers that today and to the end of time Jesus recalls himself to us and encounters us afresh. But memory is subordinate to presence. A typical communion hymn in our Church is Horatius Bonar's:

Here, O my Lord, I see Thee face to face,
Here would I touch and handle things unseen.

The intervening centuries disappear; the Eternal Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever, meets us to fill our every need. The Supper is not the occasion for a merely subjective experience in which believers are reminded of their crucified and risen Savior, of his sufficiency for them and of his purposes for his disciples. On the other hand, the Westminster Confession uses negatives to deny the crassly material Roman conception of communion with Christ. We do not think of Christ as present in "a corporal and carnal manner."

The outward elements in the Sacrament, duly set apart to the uses ordained by Christ, have such relation to Him crucified, as that truly, yet sacramentally only, they are sometimes called by the things they represent, to wit, the body and blood of Christ, albeit in substance and nature they still remain, truly and only, bread and wine, as they were before.¹

But with these negatives out of the way, the Confession makes the positive affirmation:

¹ *Westminster Confession*, xxix, v.

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Worthy receivers, outwardly partaking of the visible elements in this Sacrament, do then also inwardly by faith, really and indeed, spiritually receive and feed upon Christ crucified, and all benefits of his death; the body and blood of Christ being then as really but spiritually present to the faith of believers in that ordinance, as the elements themselves are to their outward senses.²

The words in which the Sacrament is distributed emphasize the presence of the Lord who in the first person says to each communicant, "This is *My body*," "This cup is the New Covenant in *My* blood."

It is futile to discuss whether Christ, who promised to be with his followers always, is more present at this Sacrament than he is at other times. There can be no more and less, when we think of his spiritual fellowship with his church. Christian experience does not suffer us to make a distinction between a sacramental and a spiritual presence. But this Supper is his appointed means of communicating himself to his people. In that all Christians are agreed. The Lord's Supper is, therefore, not "a bare sign," but a means of Christ's self-giving to the receptive. Calvin put it:

Christ there offereth and delivereth the thing signified to all them that sit at the spiritual banquet; although it be received with fruit by the faithful only, who receive so great bountifulness with true faith and thankfulness of mind.³

It is this "so great bountifulness" which is at times not adequately emphasized, and renders the service of Holy Communion meager and beggarly. The hymns and passages of Scripture with which the service is accompanied can do much to enhance for communicants the greatness of God's gift in Christ. And it is these on which liturgically we of the Presbyterian tradition depend. But basically the doctrine of the Supper as held in our communion has the highest commendation from those who view it from the outside. Richard Hooker in treating the doctrine paraphrased Christ's words:

This hallowed food, through concurrence of divine power, is in verity and in truth, unto faithful receivers, instrumentally a cause of that mystical participation, whereby as I make Myself wholly theirs, so I give them in hand an actual possession of all such saving grace as My sacrificed Body can yield, and as their souls do presently need, this is to them and in them My Body.⁴

For himself he accepts this doctrine—evidence that in the interpretation of this Sacrament historic Anglicanism and historic Presbyterianism are in accord.

Hooker gives his judgment that this interpretation of the Supper

² *Ibid.*, xxix, vii.

³ *Institutes*, IV, xvi, 10.

⁴ *Ecclesiastical Polity*, V, lxvii, 12.

embraces the positive teaching of other branches of the church, both ancient and modern, although Roman and Greek Catholics and Lutherans attach importance to other aspects and details of the Sacrament. To Hooker it seems an ecumenical doctrine uniting Christians in its statement of what all of them receive in this supreme means of their Lord's communion with them.

It has in it nothing but what the rest do all approve and acknowledge to be most true; nothing but that which the words of Christ are on all sides confessed to enforce, nothing but that which alone is sufficient for every Christian man to believe concerning the use and force of this Sacrament, finally nothing but that wherewith the writings of all antiquity are consonant and all Christian confessions agreeable.⁵

There are differences concerning where and how Christ's presence is to be found in this Sacrament, but all concur in the fact of his real presence—that at his table he feeds us with himself the living Bread from heaven.

According to Reformed doctrine it is through the entire sacramental action that Christ imparts himself. Jesus thought and spoke in pictures, and the Lord's Supper is an "acted parable." It is an event in which action plays a momentous role. An early name for the Supper was "the breaking of the bread." The Apostle Paul speaks of Christians in it "*showing the Lord's death.*" In the medieval Church this Sacrament was spoken of as *Actio*. And in Reformation Scotland the word was often used.⁶ It is worth noting that a leading scholar in the Roman Catholic liturgical movement, the Benedictine Dom Casel, defines the Mass as "a symbolic *act* which is imbued with the *presence* of the redemptive *act*." Rudolf Otto sees in this statement a possible drawing together of Evangelical and Roman Christians in this Sacrament which for centuries has been a chief barrier between them.⁷

It is an action in which minister and people participate. The officiating minister stands behind the table, facing the people, so that all can see the symbolic acts when he breaks the bread and lifts the cup in thanksgiving. In the earliest churches, basilicas, the table stood at the center of the apse, and the bishop stood behind it. In St. Peter's in Rome today, the Pope takes this place, which is called "the basilican position." No doubt it has been traditional in Rome from primitive days. The Benedictines have been urging their fellow churchmen to restore this usage as more ancient and more liturgically effective. The people all receive of the bread and cup. The minister is not a "celebrant"—rather, people and minister celebrate together Christ crucified, risen, and present with them in power.

The Action, as with all genuine Protestants, is never regarded as a

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Cf. *Sermons on the Sacrament*, by Rev. Robert Bruce, preached in Edinburgh prior to 1589.

⁷ Cf. his *Religious Essays*, p. 52.

propitiatory sacrifice. Once for all Christ offered himself at Calvary. It is a thankful commemoration of that sacrifice, in which the broken loaf and outpoured wine vividly portray him who was crucified for us and for all mankind, and as we make bread and wine our own by eating and drinking we portray to ourselves and our world Christ the life-giver, and offer ourselves to him for the furtherance of his purpose. The Sacrament is a joyful celebration of his cross seen in the light of his triumphant resurrection and reign, of his continuing presence in his Body, the Church, and his supply of wisdom and power to believers in his own confidence that his Father's kingdom will certainly be established. The commemoration of the sacrifice at Golgotha includes Christ's constant gift of himself to and in us, and issues in our offering of ourselves as living sacrifices to God in and with Christ, that his will may come to pass in earth as in heaven.

II

The commemoration of Christ's passion and death for us and our self-giving to him are beautifully brought together in a communion hymn by Rev. Dr. John Brownlie, a modern Presbyterian and a poet of no mean attainments. He took a few lines from an ancient Greek Office, and let them suggest stanzas which sum up our conception of this Sacrament. The hymn opens:

Let Thy blood in mercy poured,
Let Thy gracious body broken,
Be to me, O gracious Lord,
Of Thy boundless love the token:
Thou didst give Thyselv for me;
Now I give myself to Thee.

In the second stanza occur the fine lines:

All that love of God could give,
Jesus by His sorrows gave me.

The final stanza contains the address:

Thou art my exalted King,

and lifts a communicant's thought from the scene in the past to the glorified Lord of this and all worlds, "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." The late Dr. Louis F. Benson, who edited our hymnals for a generation with learning, fine taste, and spiritual insight, set the lines to *Meinhold*, a very plain and readily singable chorale, which commends itself to the musical taste of our oncoming generation, in revolt from the sentimental tunes in vogue in the late nineteenth century. It seems to me doctrinally perfect and devotionally unsurpassed by any other communion

hymn. With delicate dramatic power it represents our Lord in his passion and death, and in the two closing lines of each stanza places the individual communicant face to face with his Lord. Here is the corporate Action of the Church, commemorating the sacrifice of her Savior, and the believer's personal appropriation of its benefits for him and consequent offering of himself to his Lord.

Modern Presbyterians, and particularly those who have adopted the scholarly interpretation of the New Testament, are sometimes charged with minimizing the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. A typical scholar, both a New Testament critic and a theologian, the late Principal James Denney, concluded his examination of the Marcan narrative of the Supper with the following sentences:

It is the nature of a symbol that it can be set in different lights, and always seems to call for further interpretation. But from the beginning, the symbolism of the Supper, and the words which gave the key to it, spoke unambiguously to the Christian mind. They spoke of Jesus giving Himself, in His body and blood, in all the reality of His humanity and His passion, to be the meat and drink of the soul. They spoke of a covenant based on His sacrifice of Himself—not merely a bond in which believers realized their brotherhood, but a new relation to God into which they entered at the cost of His life. They spoke of a transcendent kingdom in which all the hopes and yearnings of earth would be fulfilled, and in which the Master, who was about to die, would celebrate His reunion with His followers in a world where death and sorrow have ceased to be. We cannot think that less than this was in the mind of Jesus when He said, "This is My body—this is My covenant blood—I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until I drink it new with you in the Kingdom of God."

No Christian faith ever put Jesus in a more central and commanding place than this. It is not a place which can be taken or shared by another; it is all His own. This unique and extraordinary place is not only given to Him, but taken by Him. It is not taken only when it is thrust upon Him; it is assumed in the words He here speaks, and in the symbolic acts which accompany them, before anyone has seen what they involved. The experience of the Church for two thousand years justifies the self-assertion, or rather the self-revelation, of Jesus in the Supper, but it is not the Church's experience which is reflected in the narrative. The same wonderful Person whose incommensurable greatness has already flashed upon us in this scene or that of the gospel history here rises as it were to His full stature before our eyes, and shows us the ultimate meaning of His presence and work in the world. The revelation justifies all that Christians have ever felt or said of their debt to Jesus; and it is one of the services the Supper does to the Church, that it recalls Christians periodically to the things which are fundamental in their faith—the atoning death of Jesus, fellowship with God through Him, the assurance of immortality. We do not feel it presumptuous to conceive such thoughts or to accept them as true: they are in the mind of Christ before they are in our minds, and we rest on them as realities in Him.⁸

This is a measured summary by a careful historian of the meanings

⁸ Denney, J., *Jesus and the Gospel*. New York: A. C. Armstrong, 1909.

for Jesus himself in the Supper which he kept with his disciples—meanings which have remained in it for Christians throughout the centuries. To the three convictions listed by Dr. Denney, I should add a fourth—the conviction of the certain victory of the kingdom for which He was about to lay down his life. This is a confident hope needed urgently in days of discouragement like our own—darker in prospect on all sides than those of the first decade of this century when Dr. Denney wrote his book.

III

In our Presbyterian usage the words of the institution of the Supper, usually from 1 Cor. 11:23-26, are read as the warrant and pattern for the sacramental action. We are not seeking a reproduction in detail of what occurred in the Upper Room, where undoubtedly those present reclined at table and where presumably the foot-washing took place. But the significant acts of Master and disciples—his giving of the loaf and his lifting of the cup in thanksgiving, and the reception by all present of the bread and wine—are scrupulously followed. In the Scottish Kirk some ministers make much of the *breaking* of the loaf, but that appears not to have been in our Lord's mind.⁹ It was his *giving* his life to and for them, which all the narratives stress. Jesus apparently did not himself partake of either bread or cup; his gift to his disciples fills his thought. A nonparticipating attendance at the Sacrament seems no faithful celebration of the Action. Nor with us can the Sacrament be *reserved*: how can a corporate action be put away or stored? Bread and wine from the table may be taken to members of the church unable to be present; but the words of Christ, when he made them symbols of his body and blood, and the prayer of thanksgiving and consecration, must be repeated, in order that the shut-ins may share in the sacramental action, by which Christ imparts himself and in turn they present themselves to him.

In our usage what remain of the consecrated elements can be disposed of in any seemly way. No “sanctity” attaches to the physical symbols: they are sacramental only as part of the corporate action. In rural congregations, the bread is often scattered for the birds—a Franciscan custom in fancy, and fitting as a symbol that all creatures of our Lord and King are cared for by his bounty.

In our churches the elders, lay representatives of the congregation chosen for leadership by reason of their characters, spiritual insight, and

⁹ See another Presbyterian historical scholar, Allan Menzies, *The Earliest Gospel*. Macmillan & Co., 1901, p. 262.

abilities, share in the celebration of the Supper. They sit about the table, receive the elements from the minister, and pass them to the communicants. Their conspicuous place with the minister gives the impression that this Supper is a corporate act of the church. Further it is a rule with us that, when the Lord's Supper is celebrated in a sick room or in a home, one of the elders shall accompany the minister, and this private celebration shall be entered on the sessional record, thus becoming an action of the church.

Parenthetically one may remark that it seems peculiarly unfortunate in congregations of our tradition, where stress is laid on New Testament precedent, that modern conceptions of hygiene have generally substituted trays of small individual cups (always unesthetic in appearance) for the common chalice. Something of the original symbolism is lost, for the sharing of Christ's cup is prominent in St. Luke's narrative ("Take this, and divide it among yourselves," Luke 22:17). The symbolism is as seriously obscured when wafers are substituted for the loaf (*artos*) of which St. Paul speaks: "We being many are one loaf, one body"—a pregnant reminder of the unity of Christ's people. The wafers apparently have come into Presbyterian circles through returned chaplains who found them convenient at the front or on naval vessels; but they are a recent innovation and out of place in churches of our tradition.

Unquestionably from earliest days the oneness of all Christ's followers was recalled at the Supper, as the prayers at the table given in the *Didache* attest: "As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains and being gathered together became one, so may Thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into Thy kingdom." Somewhere in the office St. Paul's words in 1 Cor. 10:17 should be said. They recall the fact that every celebration of the Supper is an action of the whole church, and they are peculiarly welcome in this epoch when ecumenical thinking has been revived among Christians. It seems unlikely that the common cup can be restored—hygienic perils are real—but a chalice should be on the table and employed by the minister in his symbolic act of offering thanksgiving. To lift a tray of small cups is too ridiculous!

IV

With all evangelical Christians we believe that faith is the means by which in the Supper we receive Christ "to our spiritual nourishment and growth in grace." But it is not our faith which brings him to the feast and constitutes it a sacrament. Independently of us, he is present and waiting to receive his often doubting and always imperfectly believing people. He

honors his own institution, which his church obediently observes, and he offers himself to us through the church's sacramental action, whether we come believably or in stolid indifference. There would be small comfort and no solid cause for gladness in the Holy Communion if Christ's presence and gift of himself depended on anything which we sinners bring to his table. We should seriously "examine ourselves," and come with penitence and trust, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, to present ourselves to him who eagerly offers us his all. But there must be no anxious introspection to discover whether we have faith in him.

In John Knox's *The Maner of the Lord's Supper*, the minister is bidden to assure communicants:

Albeit we fele in ourselves much frailtie and wretchedness, as that we have not our faith perfite and constant as we ought, being many times ready to distruste Godes goodness through our corrupt nature, and also that we are not so thoroughly geven to serve God, neyther have so fervent a zeale to set forth his glory as our duety requireth, felinge still such rebellion in our selves, that we have nede dayly to fight against the lustes of our fleshe; yet, nevertheless, seeing that our Lord hath dealed thus mercifully with us, that he hath printed his Gospell in our hertes, so that we are preserved from falling into desperation and misbelieve; and seeing also he hath indued us with a will and desire to renownce and withstand our own affections, with a longing for his righteousenes and the keping of his commandementes, we may now be right well assured, that those defautes and manifolde imperfections in us, shalbe no hindrance at all against us, to cause him not accept and impute us as worthie to come to his spirituall Table. For the ende of our coming thyther is not to make protestation that we are upright and juste in our lives, but contrariwise. Let us consider, then, that this Sacrament is a singular medicine for all poore sicke creatures, a comfortable helpe to weak soules, and that our Lord requireth no other worthines on our parte, but that we unfaynedly acknowledge our noghtines and imperfection.¹⁰

The Westminster divines, most of whom were, or had been, pastors and familiar with the hesitations of overscrupulous Christians, added in their *Larger Catechism* a special question: "May one who doubteth of his being in Christ or of his due preparation, come to the Lord's Supper?" and give this reply:

One who doubteth of his being in Christ, or of his due preparation to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, may have true interest in Christ, though he be not yet assured thereof, and in God's account hath it, if he be duly affected with the apprehension of the want of it, and unfeignedly desires to be found in Christ, and to depart from iniquity: in which case (because promises are made, and this Sacrament is appointed, for the relief even of weak and doubting Christians) he is to bewail his unbelief, and labor to have his doubts resolved; and, so doing, he may and ought to come to the Lord's Supper, that he may be further strengthened.¹¹

¹⁰ The Liturgy of John Knox. Glasgow University Press, 1886.

¹¹ Question 172.

In our tradition the Lord's Supper is a corporate action of the church. There is always a question as to how frequently this sacrament should be celebrated. The churches of the Reformed tradition, believing that it should be the action of a whole congregation, and that it should be prepared for most carefully in order that communicants might derive utmost benefit from it, settled that it should be held no oftener than such general preparation and participation could be assured. This continues our guiding principle. It is interesting that a very devout and thoughtful Anglican, the late Professor F. C. Burkitt, should say to clergy of his communion who were urging frequent attendance on this Sacrament, "I do not think that the clergy always realize that a kind of belief in the value of Holy Communion, and of the religion which Holy Communion represents, is sometimes testified by dumbly staying away more than by perfunctory attendance."¹²

V

At ecumenical assemblies the question of intercommunion has arisen, and several separate services of Holy Communion have had to be arranged—a flagrant denial of the unity which the ecumenical assembly meets to demonstrate. Intercommunion appears to present some of our fellow Christians with a grave difficulty. Happily no such difficulty confronts those who have been reared in the tradition of the Reformed Churches. Historically there have been epochs when they felt obliged to safeguard the Supper carefully from those whose moral laxities disgraced the Christian name; but at ecumenical gatherings no such question is at issue, and all who come represent churches which recognize the Lord Jesus as "God and Savior," so that there is no problem of theological unsoundness. In our official standards the Supper is, among other things, for Christians "a bond or pledge of their communion with Christ, and *with each other* as members of His mystical body."¹³

One had supposed that an ecumenical gathering was composed of members of the mystical body of Christ attempting to make their unity more visible to the world, and the Lord's Supper is the central act of that body. With us the table is never regarded as belonging to a particular church—Presbyterian, Baptist, Anglican, Lutheran. It is always the *Lord's* table, and as such belongs to the whole household of faith. The edifice in which the Communion service is held may have any one of a number of labels affixed to it under human laws of property. Nonetheless the table is always

¹² *The Modern Churchman*, Vol. xxii, p. 306.

¹³ *Westminster Confession*, xxix, 1.

spoken of as Christ's, and amid our "unhappy divisions" remains a central symbol of unity, suggesting him to whom all the divided companies of Christians belong. The Reformed theology sees the Lord's Supper as an assertion of the oneness of all who bear the Christian name:

Saints, by profession, are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion, in the worship of God, and in performing such other services as tend to their mutual edification, as also in relieving each other in outward things, according to their several abilities and necessities, which communion, as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended unto all those who, in every place, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus.¹⁴

The first Synod of our American Presbyterian Church, meeting in 1729 in Philadelphia, received the Confession and Catechisms of the Westminster divines, "in all their essential and necessary articles," as the official doctrine of the Church. But in the Preamble to their Adopting Act, they take pains to make clear that they are "willing to receive one another, as Christ has received us to the glory of God, and admit to fellowship in sacred ordinances all such as we have grounds to believe Christ will at last admit to the kingdom of heaven."

Further in the Larger Catechism it is made plain that the Lord's Supper is a special means for strengthening the fellowship of Christians in Christ with one another: "The Lord's Supper is a sacrament, wherein they that worthily communicate testify and renew their engagement to God, and their mutual love and fellowship each with other, as members of the same mystical body."¹⁵

For us to omit a celebration of the Lord's Supper at an ecumenical meeting would seem to deprive it of the most potent means of achieving union in Christ. If sacraments are not "bare signs," as the Scots Confession of 1560 asserts they are not, and are conveyors of the grace which they signify, the Lord's Supper appears to us above all others *the* means by which Christ may achieve in his people that oneness in him which he declared he willed (John 17:20, 21). If conscientious scruples are alleged by some fellow Christians as their reason for declining intercommunion, what of our conviction whose fathers have believed that the Supper of the Lord is his appointed means of our renewing and testifying the oneness of his followers?

In the Reformed Theology the sacraments are spoken of as "seals of the covenant of grace," *i.e.*, confirmations of Christ's promises in this covenant of the gospel. The Church of Scotland has some collects, apparently

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, xxvi, II.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Quest. 168.

written in the early days of the Reformation, one of which stresses the original meaning of the Latin word *sacramentum*, "oath." The devout minister, whose student assistant I had the honor to be in Edinburgh more than half a century ago, used this collect often at the Lord's table:

O loving Father, who by Thine Oath hast promised unto us a Saviour, Jesus Christ Thy Son, Thou hast not deceived us, but hast indeed given Him unto us, as Thy Word has declared, and by Thy Sacraments Thou hast confirmed it unto us this day; yea, He hath further promised that He will abide with us unto the end of the world. Therefore, dear Father, we beseech Thee, that Thou wilt bless us in all our ways, govern us, and replenish us with joy. Let Thy crown and kingdom abide above us, and preserve us in peace, through the same Jesus Christ Thy Son. Amen.

One finds this confirming assurance in the Lord's Supper dwelt upon in the sermons of Robert Bruce, to which allusion has already been made:

"The Sacrament is appointed that we may get a better grip of Christ nor we gat in the simple word. The Sacraments are appointed that I may have Him mair fullie in my saull, that I might have the bounds of it enlarged; that He may make the better residence in me."¹⁶

¹⁶ First Sermon, pp. 28, 29.

From Edwin Lewis

ORDINARILY ONE'S UNDERSTANDING of the Church, the Ministry, the Sacraments, and Christian Tradition displays a certain coherence. It is very difficult for any man to consider the New Testament with complete objectivity. He approaches it through the corridor of time. Long before he reaches it to consider what it actually contains, his mind has been conditioned in all sorts of subtle ways. Especially has it been conditioned by the form in which he has been accustomed to commemorate the Lord's Supper, and by the meaning which he has been accustomed to give to the distinctive features of the form. It rarely occurs to him to consider whether the eucharistic service that he attended in his own church yesterday was actually what Jesus had in mind as he sat among his disciples for the Last Supper, and bade them "do this in remembrance" of him.

This is not intended to imply that the creation and perfecting of forms was not a necessity for the original Christian Fellowship. The Church, understood as "the Body of Christ," is essentially formless. That the essentially formless will find for itself forms is of the nature of the case. The forms, however, will always be instrumental, therefore provisional, therefore free, therefore not absolute. The only consideration will be the effectiveness of the forms to serve the purposes of the formless, and this involves the constant use of critical examination.

ORGANIZATIONAL RIGHTS AND LIMITATIONS

The *esse* of the church is in a faith-relation of a human soul to Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord, this creating a fellowship embracing all who enter into a like relation. This, and this only, constitutes "the Body of Christ." The practicalities that arise out of this fellowship and that serve its purposes are another matter. They are important; in some form or another they are indispensable. But they do not of themselves determine inclusion in "the Body of Christ," from which it belongs to no man or group of men to exclude another. The right of a given group of Christians to organize themselves, to prescribe conditions, to accept some into the organization and refuse others, is not a right to prescribe, regulate, and legislate respecting "the Body of Christ."

It belongs to the organized church, with its ministry, its procedures,

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and its traditions, to exercise self-criticism. Because the church has done this or that, said this or that, prescribed this or that, legislated this or that, does not mean that these activities have permanently and universally settled anything respecting the externalization of "the Body of Christ." For behind this church there stands always one great, commanding, and immovable fact—*Christ and his gospel*. The justification of any churchly form will always have to be judged in the light of its effectiveness as the servant of this changeless fact. A certain relativism necessarily attaches to all such forms. God in Christ let the gospel of his redeeming love loose in the world to find its own way. He laid upon it no absolute predeterminations of procedures. He left it to fulfill its reconciling and transforming purpose by such means as seemed best to those who surrendered themselves to it. There was only one really binding consideration: utter and undeviating loyalty to God's self-disclosure in Christ and to the message that was constituted of that self-disclosure. The history of the church and its institutions and procedures manifests at once that loyalty and the lack of it.

For church history is both testimony and judgment. It is *testimony* to the maintenance and nurturing of a genuinely Christian core, concerned only with the supremacy of the Redeeming Christ and with the integrity of his gospel. It is *judgment* in its revelation that around that core have gathered all manner of low-motived accretions, designed to increase the political and social influence of the organization and to add to the power and the glory of its officials. The impact of these accretions has been manifest in numerous directions plain for all to see. Nowhere has it been more manifest than in relation to the Lord's Supper, because the very nature of this Sacrament makes it sensitive to the expression of priestly claims, to the enlargement of sacerdotal accompaniments, and to the exaltation of ecclesiastical dignity. One has but to compare what is known as a "High Mass" with the unadorned simplicity of the Last Supper that Jesus ate with his disciples, or of that first occasion when after his Resurrection he "shared it in a new way" with the Emmaus wayfarers, or of the manner of its commemoration in an early "family church in a home," to appreciate what is meant.

It may therefore be flatly declared that the exaggerated priestly prerogatives that have issued in the transformation of the Lord's Supper into a prolific cause of Christian disunity, and of adamantine institutionalism, have no least warrant, if these prerogatives are regarded as absolutes, in the nature of the gospel, in the significance of Jesus Christ as divine self-disclosure, or in anything that was said, or done, or intended at Jesus' Last

Supper. The devising of commemorative supplements appropriate to new situations was justifiable enough, but not the transformation of these supplements into necessities dogmatically enforced.

THE ESSENTIAL CORE AND THE HISTORICAL ACCRETIONS

The central theme of the New Testament is the Life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ held to be the Incarnate Son of God. In his being who he was and doing what he did is the ground of the reconciliation of the Holy God and sinful men. The human means of experiencing this reconciliation are repentance, confession, faith, obedience, and love. The church is both that formless reality which Paul calls "the Body of Christ," and which is entirely a divine creation, and that visible fellowship which is centered in Christ as the one source of its life, which devised such forms as were deemed most useful and most appropriate both for nurturing the fellowship, strengthening its bonds, and for bringing to bear its witnessing and redeeming impact upon the world.

By far the greater part of the New Testament consists of that material which has given rise to the doctrine of the Incarnation, the doctrine of the Atonement, the doctrine of Salvation, and the doctrine of the Church as a "called-out" fellowship. The large amount of attention given to these doctrines throughout Christian history can be justified by the prominence given to their "bases" in the New Testament. Two other doctrines have also received much attention in Christian history: sometimes, indeed, they seem to have commanded most of the attention, as though to them attached the supreme importance. These two doctrines are that of the Ministry and that of the Sacraments, in particular the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Yet the amount of material in the New Testament directly supporting these doctrines is astonishingly small. If the New Testament fairly reflects the Apostolic Age, then we can truthfully say that for that age neither the question of church order nor of sacramental procedure was deemed of primary importance.

These questions assumed their great importance with the second century. In general, they went along *pari passu*. That is to say, the growth of monarchical episcopacy, sacerdotalism, and sacramentarianism is largely of a piece, although there are good reasons for believing that sacramentarianism followed behind the other two, especially sacerdotalism, and found in them much of its motivation. It seems to be in the very nature of a priestly caste that it shall devise means for increasing its own influence and power. There are gaps in our knowledge of the earlier steps of the alleged episcopal

and sacerdotal development. It is clear enough that the development was an attendant of the expansion of Christianity. The difference, however, between the simple "supervisors" of the Apostolic Church and its simple sacramental procedures, and the episcopal claims and the sacerdotal practices that began to appear in the subapostolic age, is so great as to warrant the suspicion that the mere principle of "development" is not sufficient to account for the difference. Accretions arbitrarily imposed from without are not to be regarded as normal emergents issuing from within under a "natural law."¹

THE LORD'S SUPPER IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Close though the connection is between church order and sacramental theory and practice, the second of these alone is the main concern of the present discussion. The discussion deals largely with the claim, now made, that an original simplicity, every way sufficient, in respect of the Lord's Supper, was by the beginning of the second century replaced in many localities with a highly sacerdotal procedure.

The earliest and simplest description of what was said and done at the Last Supper is found in Mark 14:22-25. Mark's description is repeated in Matt. 26:26-29, the only essential difference being that to the words "poured out for many" Matthew adds "unto remission of sins." The Lukan account differs in a number of ways: there is first the passing and "dividing" of the cup; then the breaking and sharing of the bread; and a final use of the cup, although whether the cup was shared the second time it is impossible to determine. Paul in 1 Cor. 11 gives an account which manifestly reflects the accounts in the Gospels, without exactly following either of them. He speaks of the breaking of the bread and (apparently) the passing of the cup, and includes the command, "Do this in remembrance of me." He adds as his own comment: "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death until he come."

This, with 1 Cor. 10:16ff, is practically all that we have in the New Testament. There are two or three references in the Acts to "the breaking of bread," but we can only surmise the meaning. We know from what Paul wrote how the memorial meal was abused in Corinth, and we have the instructions he gave for correcting the abuse. The fact of the commemoration in Corinth justifies the belief that the commemoration took place in other

¹ A fuller consideration of the "linguistic" difficulty and of allied questions involved in the relation between New Testament indications and later ecclesiastical practices may be found in the present writer's recently published volume, *The Biblical Faith and Christian Freedom* (The Westminster Press, 1953), especially in chapter XIV, entitled, "Free Faith and the Church."

churches, as we should expect. Nevertheless, in no other writings of the New Testament is the Lord's Supper definitely referred to.

The Fourth Gospel, in fact, although it uses five chapters to describe what took place at the time of Jesus' last meeting with his disciples, says nothing whatever about his commanding the repetition of the Supper as a "memorial." There is more than a suspicion that what John regarded as *the true way* to "eat the flesh of the Son of Man and to drink his blood" is given in the discourses on the Bread of Life in 6:22-65. Not in an occasional specific act, but in the whole attitude of the life day by day, is the self-giving of Christ truly set forth. Even in so "theological" an Epistle as Romans, and in so "churchly" an Epistle as Ephesians, and in so "sacramental" an Epistle as Colossians, and in so "priestly" an Epistle as Hebrews, and in Epistles so "pastoral" as 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus—in none of these is there a suggestion that the Lord's Supper held the place of centrality in the life and thought of the churches!

This is not an attempt to use "the argument from silence." That groups of Christians engaged in a "commemorative meal" in keeping with their understanding of the Lord's command is a perfectly safe surmise, if no more. But it is also a perfectly safe surmise that there was at this early period no uniformity in the procedure, no elaborate liturgy, no recognized necessity of priestly sanction beyond the accepted fact that every believer was a priest and could as a priest serve his fellow believers. Paul's phrase, "the church that is in thy house," could easily mean the family itself, and it would be entirely in keeping with Jewish usage that "the father of the family" should also be "the priest of the household." The Christian father presiding at a family gathering expressly designed as a "memorial" of the Crucified Lord, as a means of "communion" with him, and as a means of closer "fellowship" with him and with each other—the very situation would in many cases call for this, if the Lord's command to his disciples was to be obeyed at all.

When, in the early part of the second century, Justin Martyr could declare that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was permissible only in connection with Sunday morning worship, and even then only if a "bishop" were present, it is clear that an ecclesiasticism and a sacerdotalism had crept into the church which was in sharp contrast to the sacramental simplicities of the Apostolic Age.

THE FINAL TEST OF "VALIDITY"

Jesus once said that wherever two or three were gathered together in his name, he was there. In other words, here is the church, and here all the spiritual prerogatives of the church—"the Body of Christ"—may be exer-

cised. Whether the little gathering include a designated "priest" or not, bread may here be broken and wine poured out, and both shared in common; and in such an act and in such a moment every essential truth enacted in the drama of "the guest chamber" (Luke 22:11) in Jerusalem is enacted again. There is an authentic and undeniable fulfillment of the Lord's command; an authentic and undeniable participation in the broken body and the shed blood; an authentic and undeniable entry into the secret place of the Most High. Anyone who, thinking of the elaborate and awe-inspiring accompaniments of a "Eucharistic Feast" as he may be wont to participate in it in a great cathedral, is moved to declare that what has just been described as "authentic and undeniable" is not so at all, but is a counterfeit, is warned to beware lest he incur that fate which Christ himself declared might overtake those who "despised his little ones."

The writer of this article began his ministry with a group of "mission stations." All the missions were situated on a coast line not too easy of access. He served in successive years three of these missions. The first consisted of eight "preaching points"; the second of fourteen; the third of twelve. At the time he was not yet "ordained," but he did everything that an ordained minister would have been "authorized" to do except administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. On these missions were some of the most devoted Christians who ever lived, men and women of deep piety, subjects of a vital Christian experience. Not once during the writer's years of service on these missions was there a Holy Communion for the membership, except as described below. Nowhere on either of the missions were there even communion cups and plates. Had the unexpected appearance of "an ordained minister" made the Sacrament possible, it would have been necessary to use ordinary china or glass. On one of the missions were two or three small "Anglican" congregations, who once a year received Communion from their visiting clergyman. The writer once asked this clergyman if he might attend the Communion service. He replied: "Not unless you were baptized and confirmed in the Church of England."

It can hardly be wondered at that the people of the mission used to say to the man whom they affectionately regarded as their "minister" in the things of Christ: "If you can baptize our children, and preach to us, and marry us, and bury our dead, why cannot you give us the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper?" And again: "If the Lord commanded his followers to gather around his table, and if this is what we wish to do, on what ground does the church make it impossible for us to do it?"

This is now some fifty years ago, and the writer, like Pharaoh's butler,

"this day remembers his faults," and makes for the first time a long-delayed confession. On one occasion, he succumbed to the logic of the appeal of a small group of his people. Pledging them to secrecy, he gathered with them in the kitchen of a humble home, and using the common household ware, he went through the Communion service according to the prescribed ritual. He can still see the rapt expression on some of those toil-worn faces! If anyone says that there did not take place that night as genuine a "communion of the Body and Blood of Christ" as ever took place to the accompaniment of liturgical splendors under high-vaulting Gothic arches, then he says what is not so. And if it be also said that the occasion was exceptional, and only so far forth defensible, the inevitable reply must be that a procedure that is Christian in exceptional circumstances is *in principle* Christian in any circumstances.

A LAY COMMUNION SERVICE

That the observance of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper should take place in conditions of "propriety and decency" goes without saying. The presence of a designated "minister" or "priest" is a proper guarantee of this. But only where there is an unyielding sacerdotalism could it be maintained that administration by a "validly" ordained person was indispensable to the "validity" of the communion. Endless confusion has arisen from the custom of identifying "validity" defined as agreement with ecclesiastically prescribed procedures with "validity" defined as agreement with the spirit and purpose of Christ's original command.

What did our Lord tell his disciples to do and what significance did he tell them would attach to their doing it? This is the question of questions. We are not now inquiring what the church had done with the Lord's command a hundred years later, and what it continued to do with increasing refinements until after another thousand years it had formulated the dogma of "transubstantiation," wherein the metaphysics of Aristotle was subjected to a logical sleight-of-hand that would have shocked Aristotle into sheer incredulity. It was in 1059 that the Synod of Rome, urged on by Lanfranc of Bec and Cardinal Humbert, compelled Berengar of Tours, who had denied even the possibility of "transubstantiation," to take oath in the name of the Trinity that he believed that a literal physical change of the elements took place in the Eucharist, so that the communicant actually ate the body of Christ (*frangi et fidelium dentibus atteri*—"broken and chewed by the teeth of the faithful"). It was, however, not until 1200 that Pope Innocent III declared transubstantiation an unchangeable article of faith.

Our interest is not with all this so-called "development." It appears that "the communion of the Body and Blood of Christ" was possible for

the first Christians in their Jerusalem homes, and thereafter in homes elsewhere. Following the martyrdom of Stephen, *lay Christians* "that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word," and formed little Christian communities in such territories as are suggested by Acts 2:9-11. So far as we know these communities, far beyond the reach of any apostolic supervision, created their own supervision, precisely as a group of Jews in a remote locality would have chosen one of their number to be "ruler of the synagogue." If this was the case, who shall say that there was no proper "communion" when in these conditions the new Christians "broke the bread and drank the cup," meanwhile "remembering" their crucified Lord?

THE LAY MIND AND CHRISTIAN UNITY

And what is there in our Lord's command that could "invalidate" a similar commemoration of the Lord's Supper on the part of a group of *modern lay Christians*? Is it not possible that through commemorations of this sort, participated in by devoted laymen of various ecclesiastical names, a movement toward unity might be begun that would increase in power and influence until ecclesiastical officials would have to take note of it? The membership of the various "ecumenical" conferences is drawn almost entirely from ecclesiastics. These men are, as a rule, most aware of the traditions, most aware of the difficulties, least disposed to surrender prerogatives. Perhaps the time has come when once again Christian laymen must do as they have done before—*take the lead*.

There is nothing in the nature and purpose of our Lord's command at the Last Supper that requires that "bread" and "wine" undergo some magical transformation which only a designated ecclesiastic can bring about, before it can be the means of "communion." That the "bread" and "wine" shall be specifically set aside, "consecrated" for this purpose, yes! But such consecration does not change the *nature* of the elements: all it changes is the *purpose for which the elements are now to be used*, namely, not nourishment of the body, but nourishment of the soul. The communicant receives not "bread" and "wine" *as such*, but Christ himself, if so be that this is his great desire. It is the *communicant*, not the administrator, be he bishop or priest, cleric or layman, elder or layman, who determines whether or not the changed purpose for which the "bread" and "wine" are "consecrated" is actually fulfilled.²

² The present writer has elsewhere used the term *metatelic* to describe this "change of purpose." The word is formed from the Greek, and carries this meaning. No "magic" or "miracle" is implied. What matters is what the "bread" and "wine" are used for. See the writer's Statement, pp. 475ff., in the 1937 Edinburgh volume of the Faith and Order Movement, entitled *The Ministry and the Sacraments*, edited by A. C. Headlam and R. Dunkerley. The volume contains the Report of the Theological Commission, of which the writer was a member.

It is not beyond the range of possibility that clergymen of different denominations might be found in attendance on a Sacrament of the Lord's Supper that was administered entirely by laymen. It is not beyond the range of possibility that laymen chosen for this responsibility might themselves enter into a deepened experience such as would enormously extend their Christian influence. It is not beyond the range of possibility that from a beginning such as this there might break out that revival of the Christian religion for which there is so desperate a need, and that it would be a revival that would make vital, practical, sacrificial discipleship a greater consideration in the church than questions of ecclesiastical precedence and prerogative, privilege and power, pomp and circumstance.

It is not beyond the range of possibility that Christian intercommunion, which more often than not is blocked from the top, would in time meet decreasing opposition from the top by reason of the sheer weight of the demonstrated fact that intercommunion was an increasing actuality at the bottom. And it is therefore not beyond the range of possibility that the Ecumenical Church will be the achievement of Christian laymen who, more concerned for the salvation of the world than for the preservation of crippling tradition, more concerned to try new ways that hold some promise of Christian conquest than to galvanize old ways whose only merit is that they once had some value, will carry out in actual practice that Christian unity which ecclesiastical leadership seems powerless to bring to pass.

ONE LORD: ONE FAITH: ONE TABLE

The kingpin in the stone wall that keeps the organized Christian church divided (the Church as the Body of Christ is undivided and indivisible because it is not subject to human frailty) is the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It does not serve this function because of anything in the original intent of the Supper as our Lord commanded its continuance "in remembrance of his Death and Passion." On the contrary, its original intent was the maintenance of the fellowship as an unbroken unity made so by a common relation to Christ as Savior and Lord. The Lord's Supper has acquired its divisive influence because of features that from time to time were added to it. Christian charity may be willing to concede, some of the evidence notwithstanding, that these additions were made under the leading of the Holy Spirit in order to sharpen the apprehension of the significance of the Sacrament, dramatize the cost of human redemption, and deepen the sense of Christian unity. One may even say that some of the additions disclosed contemporary cultural influences and reflected an attempt to utilize them constructively.

But time may make ancient good uncouth. Additions that were once a help may become a hindrance. Their very history implies their provisional character, and what is provisional may always be modified. Whatever defeats its own purpose is open to reconsideration. The recognition of the need of this reconsideration may be as truly due to the leading of the Holy Spirit as was the original adoption of the feature that now creates a problem. The Holy Spirit may prompt the church to "tear down" as well as to "build up." It does not follow that all added procedures and devices need to be abolished: time may verify as well as impugn. What does follow is that anything that has been introduced into eucharistic procedure and, whatever may have been true once, is now seen to work to the hurt of the church and the endangering of its life, is calling to be so modified that the universally commemorating and witnessing and nurturing and cohesive significance of the Sacrament shall again manifest itself.

While it is true that there is a marked mutuality in the understanding held of the Church, the Ministry, and the Sacraments, what today is chiefly determinative seems to be the understanding that is held of the Sacraments, especially of the Lord's Supper. If the significance of the Supper were taken in its most primitive sense, which is palpably the sense which Christ himself intended, the contemporary problem of the Church and the Ministry would inevitably become more simple. The place to attack the barrier that creates disunity is the place where its results are most apparent and most devastating—the *Lord's Table*. At this point it can be attacked experientially, which is the most effective of all ways. It is a *theory* that creates the barrier, and nothing is so fatal to a theory as a contrary *fact*.

If Christian men and women are willing to do so, they can, by gathering at the Lord's Table with their minds freed of the supposition that only one formal procedure there is *right* and every other formal procedure there is *wrong*—they can prove, yes, *prove* as Mary did that "but one thing is needful." That "one thing" is not something that has been put there by any action of any man, however exalted his ecclesiastical status, but something, a "Real Presence," that was there from the beginning, waiting to be found by the man himself according as, in the depths of his own spirit, he fulfilled the conditions for finding it. So far as the worshiper himself is concerned, a "Real Presence" dogmatically affirmed to be there because certain words have been spoken and certain actions performed, may yet turn out to be a "Real Absence"; while what a dogmatic ecclesiastic may haughtily pronounce to be a "Real Absence" because the "right" words were not spoken nor the "right" actions performed, may yet turn out to have held a "Real Presence," as indubitably *there* as God was for Moses at the

burning bush, or for Elijah in the sound of a gentle stillness. The invisible is "viewed," the intangible is "touched," the unknowable is "known," and "clutched" is the inapprehensible.

If the test of the reality of "the communion of the Body and Blood of Christ" is in the actual experience of the communion itself—and if it be not there, then where is it?—it becomes a matter of sober truth that the conditions under which the "communion" takes place are of secondary importance. The same sincere believer could gather with Christ's people for three radically different "types" of eucharistic service, and with the same result *to himself* in each case. He could participate in the service as performed in a church following the "highest" of episcopo-liturgical traditions; he could participate in the service as performed in a church following the more restrained presbyterial or congregational procedure; and he could participate in such a service as has been described above in which the administration was entirely in the hands of Christian laymen. Anything that actually and personally happened to him in either could actually and personally happen to him in all three.

The psychological concomitants would vary greatly in their range, but the real "communion" is not in these concomitants, but in that central awareness to which they *point* and for which they may help the believer to prepare. Whether there shall be that central awareness depends upon the one fact of the worshiper's faith, surrender, and deep desire, and this one indispensable and determinative fact is as possible in conditions so simple as to be austere as it is in conditions of calculated esthetic splendor and ecclesiastical magnificence. Here, as elsewhere, not the variable stage is the thing, but *the eternal and unchangeable truth portrayed in the drama*. He who knows for himself this truth knows the truth that makes him free indeed.

From Perry E. Gresham

THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT will probably loom against the horizons of history as the major fact of twentieth-century Christianity. There is growing impatience with the divided witness of the churches that worship One Lord and read One Bible. The followers of Christ are lonely for their brethren who lift separate altars and profess superior positions with reference to Christian truth. The barriers that divide the churches are subject to re-examination. World assemblies and their local counterparts, which bring diverse denominations together for fellowship, thought, prayer, and common action, are but the institutional expression of a pervasive attitude which blows across Christendom as a clean new Pentecostal wind filling all the house wherein Christians are sitting.

I

As Christians of various confessions are brought together, they become aware at once of common beliefs and practices which tend to unite them and differences which tend to divide. At the level of sacramental practice the differences are sharp and forbidding. Men may differ in statement of belief without obvious divergence in purpose and effort. At the Lord's Table, however, the differing traditions of beliefs, doctrine, and ecclesiastical discipline are so utterly apparent and so devoutly cherished that separation occurs. As the Table is spread in the name of Christ and some are unable to partake because of conscience or confessional discipline, there arises an earnest request for some explanation of the fact that, with one Lord who gives himself to us in the precious sacrament of one Body broken for all and one Blood shed for all, yet there are restrictions which forbid the celebrant from offering to all who devoutly claim fellowship in Christ's community of redemption, and restrictions which forbid some to partake even when the Sacrament is freely offered. Herein are the issues of intercommunion.

The poignant practical problem arises from ecumenical gatherings themselves. The language of action which divides the delegates who come from the East, the West, the North, and the South to sit down in the

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Kingdom of God is more eloquent than the talk about the reunion of Christendom. Division at the Table illustrates and dramatizes our actual differences in belief, ritual, ecclesiastical order, and ways of worship. The fact that the representative delegates are the highly trained and ecclesiastically empowered emissaries from the churches makes the glaring division much more serious. The cleavage in the ranks of the disciples who share the broken loaf and proffered cup is deliberate.

The resourceful efforts at reconciling the differences by some formula appropriate to the nature of the particular ecumenical gathering have left much to be desired. No truly inclusive practice has been achieved. When an open-communion church invites all the delegates to partake, some are compelled to abstain because of doctrinal disagreement or reservations, while others abstain because the celebrant lacks adequate ordination by their standards. When a series of communion services are planned to represent various confessional traditions the unity is already destroyed, and many feel that the Sacrament is degraded to an educational device or even an object of curiosity, rather than the deepest act of devout worship which the very nature of the feast requires. Sacramental fasting is both an evasion and an admission of defeat in the attempt at affirmation of a common faith. All combinations of attempted solutions alike leave many with a distraught conscience. Those who are impatient with differences tend to blame their brethren for insistence upon what they believe to be correct doctrine or authority and ritual in the celebration of the Sacrament. Those who have carefully formulated their doctrine of the Lord's Supper as ordered by the tradition of the church tend to look on the less rigid celebration as careless or even heretical. There are no short cuts to intercommunion.

Seminaries which train ministers for the various confessions are confronted with a similar problem. The central sacrament of the church can scarcely be omitted from the festival observances of a theological seminary. Yet there is no single observance that will include all the churches which are represented in a union seminary of broad proportions. The unsatisfactory measures of open communion celebrated by the minister of an appropriate denomination leaves some students who are forbidden to partake by conscience or church rule. Celebration by different confessional groups with the margin of exclusion blatantly declares the sinful divisions of Christendom in the deeper language of sacramental action. The third alternative of celebration by the seminary as such is obviously inappropriate and confused, inasmuch as the sacraments belong to the Church and not to

the seminary. Observance by confusion is far less desirable than the honest acceptance of scandalous division.

Wherever youth groups from many denominations gather, the problem of intercommunion comes into sharp focus. The idealism of youth is a powerful dynamic for ecumenical questing. Tensions develop in the hearts of young Christians when their desire for one unshakable Christian fellowship is obstructed by the stubborn diversity of communion doctrine and practice. The supper which united the Lord's early disciples tends to divide his later ones. Frustration and bewilderment, if not outright blame, ensue.

With the revival of lay Christianity the contradiction of one Lord without one Table becomes acute. A United Council of Church Women cannot include the Lord's Supper in their fellowship of worship without excluding some of the constituents. Laymen who bring their gifts of vocational achievement into a united meeting for fellowship and social action are denied the inclusive blessing of the holy Sacrament by which men receive the gracious gift of Christ's love and render back their grateful devotion to their Savior. The alternatives worked out by leaders of ecumenical gatherings smack too much of human arrangements to preserve the ego-shattering meaning of the sacramental encounter with Almighty God.

Retreats of fellowship such as Iona, Chateau de Bossey, Parishfield, and others present the same problem. When only those churches which are in intercommunion or which practice open communion are represented, the fellowship is a fragment. When other confessional loyalties are represented, the separate tables reappear to rupture the tender ligaments of the community designed by the Heavenly Father to exemplify the Body of Christ. The deeper motivation of the fellowship removed from the distraction and rush of modern life only makes the divisive gashes more painful.

II

Examination of the reasons set forth to explain the divergence which has thus far forbidden inclusive communion reveals two classes of difficulties. For study purposes they can be designated as doctrinal and ecclesiological. The Intercommunion section of the Faith and Order movement has courageously explored these differences. The substantial volume called *Intercommunion* and the reports of the three World Conferences constitute evidence of concern and effort for the realization of one fellowship

declared in the eloquent observance of one Christian feast. An accumulation of the basic differences may serve to clarify the issues.

Doctrinal differences tend to cluster and recur around the meanings of sacrifice, the Real Presence, the words of the institution, the ritual of observance, and the biblical basis for Communion. Some hold that no person is qualified to receive the Supper unless the doctrine of the celebrant and that of the recipient are in substantial agreement. Such agreement obviously implies identity in acceptance of a certain tradition. Others hold that the objective fact of the Lord's Supper subordinates the creedal affirmations and inner beliefs of the persons involved only to find a human conviction as the basis for commitment to the objective efficacy of the Sacrament. No one could deny the importance of the central doctrines.

Few churches now hold to the doctrine that in the Lord's Supper Christ is sacrificed on the altar in actual suffering and unending agony, even though Ambrose once referred to the Supper as that "most awful sacrifice." Many believe that the sacrifice recurs as a heavenly counterpart to our human observance with angels and archangels sharing with Christ in his continuing atonement. Still more hold to the sacrifice of Christ as "once for all," but continued as a massive contemporary fact exemplified in the sacramental observance as commanded by Christ. Some are uneasy with the doctrine of sacrifice, except as the moral persuasion of Christ's suffering begets self-sacrifice in his followers through the language of memorial observance. If all Christians use the word "sacrifice" in connection with the Eucharist, they certainly mean different things by it. Charges and counter-charges of Platonic heresies, superstitious magic, positivistic nominalism, and bloody morbidity creep into the arguments of the theologians.

Innocent and universally acceptable words such as "the Real Presence" cover deep and fundamental disagreements. Some hold to the traditional doctrine of transubstantiation, while others look at it as blatant magic. Some take the luminous trail of mysticism in the approach to Communion, while others regard them with benign suspicion. Some think of the presence of Christ at the Table as the spiritual renewal of the upper-room fellowship, while others think of his presence as objectified in the Church which is his body on earth as custodian of the Sacrament. Some are somewhat squeamish of the words "Real Presence," lest there be implications of doctrines rejected by rational theology.

The words of the Supper demarcate conceptions and reflect divergent meanings. The "in, with, and under" and "in with and amongst" vie

with the variously interpreted biblical words, "this is my body" . . . "this is my blood," for Communion formulae. The precious words of invitation mellowed by venerable repetition and emotional tones of reverence are so cherished by some who have a fixed ritual that any deviation suggests irreverence. The sequence of offertory, consecration, and Communion with overtones of meaning and mystery are so precious in the experience of those who hold it as the authorized way of observance in the long tradition of the Church, that other formulae appear inappropriate. The words pronounced at the moment of communication are so charged with emotion and spiritual meaning that conversation about alternative words smacks of human meddling with sacred signs and symbols. Even when the ritual is lifted to the level of theological analysis, the more basic emotional meanings persist to color the argument. Differences here are not merely psychological. They are fundamental disparities of thought, attitude, and tradition derived from piously received revelation as ordered by the Church with the Holy Spirit as the guide. Spectator analysis can never assess the deep basis for difference.

The language of gesture is a more basic form of communication than verbal symbols. Ritual is therefore basic to the Sacrament. The motions, gestures, and attitudes of the celebrant and the communicants are not merely a way of saying something; they are modes of participation. The deep significance of dramatic language and the deep significance of ritualistic patterns which have laid hold of the unconscious life converge in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. It is self-evident that deviations from familiar modes of expression create tensions and invite controversy. Kipling sensed this grain in human nature when he wrote his *Just So Stories* with awareness of the little child's demand that each word be the same as the story is retold. The adult communicant brings his highly rational meanings to the Sacrament but his emotional life demands that the ritual of observance be "just so." God speaks to man's deep unconscious in ritualistic expression. The church at prayer is a corporate unconscious in which each person is united with every other since every one is joined with Christ. Ritual by its very nature forbids experimentation and compromise. Union at the level of unconscious communication must grow up as nurtured by the Holy Spirit. Agreement at the deepest level is more profound than intellect or will and requires time for realization.

The long cherished and often voiced hope that all Christians could find agreement on the Lord's Supper as presented in the New Testament, turns out to be more difficult to realize in practice than to advance in theory.

The biblical account is sketchy and subject to various interpretation. Each confession believes its own practice to be the natural development of the New Testament teaching. The words recorded by Paul and the Evangelists toward the end of the first Christian century show changing and diverse customs on the part of the early church. The Communion ritual of the Didache yearns for the union of Christ's followers, indicating division already at that nascent period of the Church. The ritual reads in part:

We thank Thee, O Father, for the life and knowledge which Thou hast made known to us through Jesus Thy servant, to Thee be the glory forever. Just as this broken bread was scattered over the hills and having been gathered together became one, so may Thy church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into Thy Kingdom. For Thine is the glory and power through Jesus Christ forever.

The Light of faith streams in upon our churches with the rich coloring of the stained-glass windows wrought by centuries of worship. That we should see things differently in various communions is inevitable. Yet we are one in the great comprehensive doctrine that the Supper instituted by the Lord is the central act of worship in which we devoutly remember Jesus Christ and share in his real presence. We hold it as a means of grace. We hold it as the corporate act of deep thanksgiving. Our unities are deeper than our differences even in regard to doctrine.

III

Persistent in any consideration of intercommunion is the difference of conviction with reference to ecclesiastical order. This involves not only the problem of disparate ordination, but also the whole structure of each denominational continuum. When one speaks of a "communion" one has reference to the total configuration of practices, beliefs, disciplines, and loyalties that give organic unity to a religious body. Eucharistic doctrine and practice cannot be abstracted from its relational context. The churches today are widely diverse with regard to convictions and attitudes concerning a valid ministry. There is no true intercommunion until there is a mutual ministry. Yet there would be difficulties to face even if the Spirit could lead us to the Beulah Land of a mutual ministry. So complex is the question of intercommunion that the entire nature of the visible church is involved. It is possible, however, to lift a few salient factors to the level of conscious deliberation in an effort to clarify our predicament and explore our opportunities.

The most apparently insurmountable differences derive from the hardened ecclesiastical structures which have grown sacred by venerable

practice and rigid by disciplines and statutes. A considerable portion of contemporary Christendom is devoted to the deep conviction that only the ordained priesthood of an unbroken episcopal succession from the Apostles can celebrate the Eucharist and that only confirmed members of that fellowship served by such priests can receive the Lord's Supper in its valid efficacy. A smaller section within this portion holds that such a view of apostolic succession with its complex of beliefs, rites, liturgies, creeds, and practices is of the very essence of the Church. By this view those who do not belong to this particular ecclesiastical tradition may be worthy fellowships of Christian believers, but are not of the true Church at all. This cherished attitude looms like a mountain range that defies passage on the road to reunion.

Equally intransigent are those who deny the validity of such claims. At the opposite extreme stand those who hold that even laymen chosen by the congregation can celebrate the Lord's Supper, since its meaning and effect depend on the direct authority of the Lord himself as set forth in the Scriptures and not upon the agent who invokes the Divine blessing. In between are various shades of belief and practice. Each holds his position with steadfast loyalty. Each tradition has its patterns of procedure and form which are firm in their resistance to alteration or compromise. The ecclesiastical structure of a low church may be just as rigid as that of a high church, even though the former does not define the boundaries of its communion so sharply. The realistic thinker will recognize the well-nigh irreconcilable nature of these alternative positions. Yet the eager quest continues for a deeper integrating ground. It may be necessary for God to weaken the structure of our ecclesiastical protective mechanisms. The wisdom of a Chinese sage is pertinent: "One cannot scramble eggs without breaking them."¹

IV

Beneath the arguments are signs of hope for one table to which all of Christ's followers can repair at his gracious invitation. The fact that all of us are constantly reminded that the Table is the Lord's and not ours is a harbinger of hope. The logic of one Lord is the colossal and relentless influence that shatters our human pride in confessional differences and condemns our separate tables. The Lordship of Christ is, in fact, the central doctrine of the ecumenical movement. Apart from it there is neither

¹ The four preceding paragraphs were originally printed in my article, "Issues in Inter-Communion," in the April, 1952, issue of *The Ecumenical Review*.

reason nor hope for reunion. The attitude of every celebrant and communicant is changed when he shares the loaf and the cup as from the hands of Christ. Representatives of the church can prepare, order, and administer the feast of remembrance, fellowship, and thanksgiving, but the Table belongs to Christ who gives himself to us. Proprietary attitudes are put to shame.

Moreover, the renewed emphasis on Bible study in its kerygmatic aspects brings us under the judgment of one Word of God. One cannot review the New Testament without coming face to face with the deeper meaning of the Lord's Supper. The "*koinonia*," the "Eucharist," "in remembrance of me," are enormous ideas which to conjure. When Christ said, "this is my body," the disciples sensed the meaning of his entire life. "Body" is a word that means life. When he said, "This is the New Covenant in my blood," it meant his sacrificial death in which they could and must share. Blood poured out means death. He gives his life and death to us in the Supper. The early church was one in the deep fellowship around the life and atonement of Christ in spite of difference in place and practice. We can be the same. We have begun a fresh consideration of "the fellowship." The close identification of *koinonia* with the Lord's Supper in the early Church requires careful review on the part of any who claim the fellowship of the Church without the fellowship of the Table. Christians are already united in the memorial doctrine of the feast. "In memory of me" could be inscribed with equal propriety on any communion table in Christendom. We are one, moreover, in our thanksgiving. The "Eucharist" is an integrating word. Unfortunately the emphasis has been too meager with reference to the Lord's Supper as thanksgiving, but no Christian would deny the essential nature of a grateful human response to Christ who gives himself to us.

The rediscovery of biblical eschatology brings into focus those words of the Supper, "till he come." When one sees the Church as set between its beginning in the incarnation, ministry, atonement, and resurrection of Christ and its fulfillment above and beyond history, there is new perspective with reference to the message of Christ in his Supper. The Church is in process with reference to the past ("in remembrance of me") and with reference to the future ("till he come"). This neglected emphasis of Communion doctrine has taken a new position of acute awareness in contemporary theology. Arguments abound, but the persistent words of the New Testament tend to unite the followers of Christ who meet around his Table.

The idea of one church as founded in history and taught in the Scripture is definitely in the minds of all contemporary Christians as well as expressed in contemporary history by the ecumenical movement. The *Una Sancta* is yearning for visible expression. Hugo once said, "There is nothing so powerful as an idea whose time has come." The One Holy Catholic Church is such an impelling idea. Theologians differ as to whether "one table" comes as an earnest of reunion or the seal of its realization. The logic of Christian doctrine maintains that the Church is already one in Christ but divided in man's expression. The broken loaf and shared cup are the deeper language of one united church whether man admits it or not. As the idea of "the Church" supplants the idea of "the churches," there is more inclusive fellowship at the Lord's Table.

Since Christ has united us we have no right to stay apart. Since our One Lord invites us to his one Table, we have no right to absent ourselves because of human arrangements and traditions. We cannot ignore the important differences of doctrine and order, but we are under the judgment of Christ to resolve these differences to the end that our lonely yearning for fellowship at the Table will be fulfilled in the profound and devout expression of inclusive communion. There must be no mere mush of concession but, rather, a deeper integrating ground as given by Christ and witnessed in history by the New Testament. Each celebration of the Eucharist can be a local expression of the universal church. Intercommunion begins not at some world meeting but "where two or three are gathered together." Horizons of communicants must expand to world dimensions. When Christian hearts respond as one to their Lord at his Supper, it is incumbent upon the theologians and ecclesiastics to be led of the Holy Spirit into inclusive communion as a means of grace.

For living bread our hungry souls are yearning;
Our thirsty spirits crave that cup divine.
No barrier or race or creed or nation
Can break that sacramental comradeship of bread and wine
As long as mankind prays,
"Our Father, which art in Heaven."

Existential Sacramentalism

E. L. ALLEN

IN ONE of his most recent books, *The Church in the New Social Order*, Emil Brunner calls for an "existential sacramentalism." The present essay is an attempt in this direction. I have purposely refrained from consulting again the paragraph in which he voices this request, so that what follows is offered entirely on my own responsibility and may not conform to what Brunner himself had in mind. If we return to Kierkegaard as the father of contemporary existentialism, we find that he was radically individualist, and that, while his thinking had always a religious reference, he was lacking in an adequate sense of community. One looks in vain, therefore, for any understanding of the Sacraments on his part. Jaspers and Marcel, however, have shown, as also has Berdyaev, that an existentialism is possible that does equal justice to individuality and community. Even Sartre's revival of the thesis *homo lupis homini* is not meant to be final, but to lead us to a repudiation of any such attitude.

I propose to treat the subject of the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist, call it what you will, by asking four questions: What is meant by the presence of Christ? In what sense is this objective? How is it related to the elements? What is the relation between our communion with Christ and our communion with one another?

I

To begin with, then: What is meant by the presence of Christ? We tend, I suppose, to think that presence is a simple matter, merely coexistence in space and time. In a military formation the roll is called; those who answer to their names are reported present, those who do not are reckoned as absent. The friend who drops in to spend the evening with us is obviously present. But how far is he genuinely present if we become aware that his thoughts are far away, so that he scarcely listens to what we are saying? In what sense was I present at the lecture I attended last week, when I was so tired that I slept half the time or was so preoccupied planning my summer holiday that I have little or no idea what was said? Such con-

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siderations as these are a clear indication that coexistence alongside another in space and time is not, as we are apt to think, the primary sense of presence. It is rather only the minimal instance of this.

We have been working thus far with a static view of presence, by which we have reduced it almost to the juxtaposition of objects. Let us substitute for this a dynamic view. Can we perhaps say that that is present which enters as a formative factor into a given situation? As I type this, the keys of the machine are present, unconsciously so while I manipulate them automatically, consciously so when I pause to correct an error. If now the telephone bell rings, something new becomes present to me, it in fact forms the center around which a fresh situation takes shape, replacing for the time being the old one, so that for the next few minutes I live as though there were no typewriter. Or, again, when I recall an engagement I had forgotten or a promise made a week ago, something out of the past establishes itself as present and determines my actions here and now. Presence in this dynamic sense is a matter of power. The present is the realm of what exercises power upon me, the past the realm of that which once had power but has lost it, the future the realm of possibility out of which new powers as yet unknown to me may emerge.

Can we further specify the kind of power and therefore of presence that attaches to a person? Here we may follow Marcel and say that what constitutes a person present is his availability, his openness to us and our need. A person is present to me when he enters into my situation as one who makes an offer of himself, opens a credit in my favor, and allows me to draw upon his resources. The supreme instance of this sense of presence is when another person throws in his lot with us, binds himself to us, makes our fortune and misfortune equally his own. The poignancy of death lies very largely in the fact that it makes this kind of thing impossible henceforth. We say, "This and that will happen; he used to be with us in it, but we shall see him there no more." The sense of absence is not merely the recognition that a place will be left unoccupied. There is something positive about it. We shall miss the familiar smile or tone of voice, the same kindly offer of help will not be renewed, however much we may need it.

The presence of Christ accordingly transcends what has been spoken of so far. It is a personal presence that consists in availability, the offer of himself to us. But it is not arrested by death, rather does death enrich and enlarge it. He is present as one who is alive from the dead, who has passed through death and come forth victor. While therefore not with us visibly and palpably as our friends are, he possesses the quality that marks off the

living from the dead, the ability to take the initiative and to enter our experience in fresh ways. Those who are dead can be remembered and we can still learn much from them. But their power to make themselves available is now exhausted, no new traffic can run between them and us as it can in the case of the living. Christ can do new things with us, as only the living can. But at the same time he is free from the limitations to which the living are subject, so that they are bound by space and time in their relations with us and are often prevented thereby from coming to our assistance. Christ is present to successive generations. He is immanent in the space-time order but transcends it. He can use it without its restricting his availability.

II

How far is this presence objective? Here again we are in danger of supposing that a minor but obvious feature of our experience is the essential and fundamental one. We know exactly how the bread and wine are there. They are visible to us. They were placed on the altar or table at a particular moment and will be removed at another such moment. They would be in their place even if we were not in ours. So they are objective, given, and wholly independent of us. We think therefore that something of the kind will be true also of Christ. His Body and Blood will be there, not visibly indeed, but after the manner in which things such as bread and wine are there. That is implied in all doctrines, whether of transubstantiation, consubstantiation, or otherwise, in which it is alleged that the wicked actually partake of the Body of Christ, though not to their profit spiritually. The Body of Christ is a thing to be handled like any other thing. If this account is rejected, the alternative seems to be a purely subjective view. Christ is present, so to speak, just in so far as he is brought there by our faith. But this is equally repugnant to the meaning of the Sacrament. We receive in faith what is given, offered to our faith, not anything that is created or induced by it.

We must once again think dynamically instead of statically. We must not allow ourselves to be shut up to the two alternatives that *either* Christ is present *apart altogether from* our response *or* that he is present *in virtue of* such response. There is yet a third possibility. May not Christ be present as a power to elicit from us a response? He is given to us, not as a thing that is deposited within our field of vision, but as a beloved Person whom we receive with gratitude as from God. Such a Person enters our life as an invitation to our freedom, a gracious overture we accept or refuse. A modern dramatist makes one of his characters say that "no one is ever deeply loved

who is not as incredulous of love as he is of death.”¹ The objectivity of the Beloved lies in his sheer incredibility, the double miracle of his being *so* and of his being *ours*. Yet can we finally separate his being *so* from his being *ours*?

Such considerations enable us to understand better what is meant by the Real Presence. Reality, as we have said, is to be found in power rather than in the occupation of space and time. But in the case of a person such power, if it is that of love—and this is so in the instance under consideration—does not impose itself, it offers itself to freedom. We speak of a person's becoming real to us when, after we have accepted him for some time as a mere part of our environment, we suddenly become aware of his worth. The real presence of Christ in the Sacrament is not another instance of the same order as the presence of the bread and wine, but of another order altogether. He is really present as the whole process of the sacramental action becomes complete, as the offer he makes of himself in it evokes our response and we receive him as one marvelously and incredibly given to us.

While therefore the elements are the same for each person in the sense that it would make no difference which fragment of the bread is taken by me and which by you, Christ is the same for each of us in the sense that he meets our individual needs each in the appropriate and satisfying way. He offers himself personally to each and evokes from each his individual and unique response. Once again, the kind of objectivity that his presence possesses is not that of a thing but that of a person. The wise counselor is the same for everyone who consults him in the sense that he has for each person who comes to him just that insight and sympathy he needs. So it is with Christ in the Sacrament. His presence does not come first, to be followed by our devotion. Nor does our devotion come first, to be followed by his presence. He is present in and for our devotion as that which elicits it. And each one who receives him so feels that he is given to him personally, to be received in wonder, gratitude, and love.

III

What is the connection between the elements in the Sacrament and the presence of Christ in it? Here we may have recourse to Marcel's “principle of incarnation,” according to which the spiritual world communicates with us in and through the material world. The good intentions of another person are inaccessible to us until he authenticates them by his good deeds. The hermit who withdraws from the allurements of society learns very

¹ Morgan, Charles, *The River Line: a play*. London, The Macmillan Company, 1952, p. 148.

soon that he has still to contend with the passions and instincts that belong to an embodied existence. We may not identify some particular aspect or instance of the material world with the spiritual—that would be idolatry. Yet a Word that was wholly dissevered from the flesh would quite fail to reach our ears. Just because we are lodged by the body in a world of objects, God who transcends all objects reveals himself to us by using now one and now another of them as sign and symbol of his presence.

The Divine presence cannot be reduced to any form of spatial contact, nevertheless it is realizable and effective only as it submits to come under the laws of the spatio-temporal world. So a friend assures us of his friendship by the kindly look and the reassuring smile or, if for a while we are parted, by a letter. So a bereaved person has certain places and objects that are peculiarly associated with the one who has been taken: he would say that they are charged with memories of him. Not only did men think at one time that the name of God dwelt somehow in the temple; few present-day Christians could dispense with attachment to the local church and congregation as the place where they meet with God in a special sense. A symbol of this kind is no mere reminder of something unfortunately absent; it is effective in its operation, so that it possesses the power to reinstate the past in the present by making it a factor in our situation as we receive it.

We go back to the night in which the Lord Jesus was betrayed, to see there an illustration of this principle of incarnation. The action of Jesus is perhaps best understood when it is assimilated to the acted parable of the Old Testament prophet. By his use of the bread and wine he dramatized his impending death and self-giving. But he did this not as though that death were something still to come. Because it was no harsh fate that overtook him but an act of obedience to the Father and love to men, he made it a present reality for those who gathered at the same table. In offering the bread he gave himself to and for them; in and through the elements he bound himself to them, pledged himself to do and suffer for their sakes. Giving the wine, he gave himself with it. When we in our turn repeat what he said and what he did, we offer our sacramental prayer in the faith and hope that he will do again for us what he did for those first disciples long ago. We pray that he will speak to us through the words we utter, that he will communicate with us through the elements, that he will choose them afresh to mediate his presence thereby. We do not receive the elements from his hands, we take them from the one who acts in his name: as we do so, we pray that he will give himself to us in them.

Thus the elements have their significance only within the service as a

whole; they are the point at which it is crystallized, at which something is done in Christ's name that bears witness to what he does for us. He manifests himself in answer to our prayer, yet we only dare to pray because he has given us the service as a pledge that he will come to us there. He makes himself available to us in his supreme moment of self-giving, he dedicates himself afresh to the Cross though all, we ourselves included, should forsake him. He offers himself to us in his total enterprise of redemption as one from which we can derive benefit only as we are willing to participate in it. And our responsibility in what happens is an awful one. For in the midst of our common life with its preoccupations we dare to constitute afresh, to make present for us, that fateful situation from which Jesus went forth to die. And how shall we go forth from it? To deny him, to forsake him for our own safety? Oh, surely not! We will follow him to Calvary.

IV

Finally, what is the relation between the two senses in which the word "communion" is used, between our communion with the Lord and our communion with one another? "The bread which we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ?" These Pauline words have a double meaning, for the Body of Christ is at once that of his Passion and that of the Church in which his risen life is continued. We who partake of the bread are one loaf. Our unity is renewed in this act of worship, and our unity with Christ is at the same time unity with one another in him—or it is unreal. Have we grasped that this is so, that there is really only one sense of the word "communion," since this cannot be with Christ unless it is also with our fellow Christians? There are some forms of administration of the Sacrament that militate against this, making it a series of individual acts. Each communicant then tends to think of himself as brought into a solitary relation with Christ rather than into a shared relation. He will perhaps feel something strange about the language that is here employed, for which the communion service must be a common commitment if it is to be a meeting with Christ.

One of the basic truths for which the Bible stands is that, while our relation to God may not be identified with our relation to the neighbor, neither of these has reality apart from the other. The two great commandments, as Jesus taught, are rather the two inseparable aspects of one commandment; the love of God and the love of the fellow man are not to be dissociated. The New Testament is as clear and emphatic on this as the Old. Did not the Lord himself say: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them"? And what can

rival in this connection the parable of the sheep and the goats? To succor the sick and needy, so it is taught, is neither a substitute for the service of Christ nor an extra added to it; it is the form under which the service of Christ is carried out in this world. Numbers are not of moment in a communion service: what is decisive is the quality of the fellowship. In the last resort, we are drawn to Christ in the measure in which we are drawn to our fellows, and we receive him in the bread and wine before us only if and as we receive him in those who worship at our side.

If we ask whether Christ is received by us as individuals or as members of the church, the answer is that the communion service is precisely the place at which this distinction should not be drawn. As we only become persons as we participate with others in a common activity of giving and receiving, so we are individuals in Christ only as we share in the corporate life he creates and maintains. Christ offers himself to us as members one of another within the church as it goes down the ages and as it is localized in this particular spot today. Inasmuch as we receive the least of these his brethren in his name—for here of course it is a conscious reception of Christ that is aimed at—we receive and entertain him as Lord of us all. If he uses the elements as signs of his presence, is not that, in part at least, because by attracting our attention in common they focus on him to whom they bear witness our common loyalty and common life?

There is something of practical significance here. It is a not uncommon experience, when we receive the Sacrament in some closely-knit group such as a conference or retreat, where we have the assurance that those who are with us care as we do for Christ's kingdom, that we experience his presence as never before. Then we return to the routine of church life, where so often we meet others at the social level mostly, and our next communion service is formal and empty. We are tempted then to say to ourselves that what happened on the previous occasion was illusory, an emotional condition induced by special circumstances. But we are wrong in so judging. Those circumstances may unfortunately be unusual, but they should be normative. For when our communion with one another is so close, intimate, and purposeful, then it is that it incarnates and conveys the Lord himself. The reality of his presence does not depend on the soundness of our eucharistic doctrine, nor on our conformity to the New Testament pattern, but on the spirit in which we keep the rite. Where no man-made barriers divide us, where spiritual kinship overrides all social distinctions, where a common purpose inspires the whole and each member, there our prayer meets with his response and his availability supplies our need.

The Prospect for Christianity

HERBERT BUTTERFIELD

I

WHEN WE CONSIDER the position of the churches in the Western world today, and remember the relentless march of secularism during the last two hundred and fifty years, it is difficult to avoid wondering about the part that Christianity is likely to play in our section of the globe in the generations that are in front of us. The Christian Church has been driven from that general presidency which it once enjoyed in European society as a whole, driven from that majority position which enabled it to gain so many monopolies and priorities and special advantages for itself. The time has come when Christianity, for example, must compete on fairly equal terms with all the other gospels, creeds and ideologies which now do battle for the possession of the souls of men.

Many Christians still allow their thinking to be unconsciously shaped by the memory or the survivals of that old system of privilege; their minds are governed by the traditional picture of the church's role in European society and civilization. There is nothing in New Testament Christianity, however, which authorizes us to claim from Providence that things should be made easy for us in this way. Nothing in the religion itself gives us the right to expect that even in the cause of the gospel we should enjoy the alliance of political authorities, mundane systems, vested interests, and organized force. In considering the prospects of Christianity, we should be wise, therefore, to begin by throwing out of our minds all the ancient, illicit dreams of power. In spite of the remnants of the old system which still survive, we should be closer to reality if we pictured Christianity against a pagan background, Christianity in a hostile world.

If we stretch our vision to parts of the globe which are alien to western culture—the realm of Islam, the awakened peoples of Asia and Africa, and the large territory that is under communism—we discover that here again a privileged position has been lost. Western man, and particularly the western European, seems to have forfeited that facile supremacy which he

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once enjoyed in all the quarters of the earth. Our science and our secularism have proved to be more easily communicable to other continents than either Christianity itself or the subtler virtues of our civilization. At the same time, our science and that part of our secular culture which is transmissible are bound to have the same dissolvent effects on the traditional systems of India, Japan and China as they have had upon the Christian heritage in France and Germany, for example. The religions of the East are therefore threatened by the same kind of dislodgement which our own traditional system has been suffering in recent generations. And this means that, sooner or later, Christianity will be faced over still larger areas of the globe with the very problem which we confront at home—the spectacle of modern secularism.

It may be the case, therefore, that in the world at large things will have to become still worse for the Christian—or at least must come to appear worse—before we can expect them to be better. We must not blind ourselves, however, to the fact that the developments which have been mentioned, and even the universal spread of secularism, will offer Christianity no doubt the greatest test but also the greatest opportunity in all its history. For secularism itself may be very hostile at the moment, but it is fickle and flexible and amorphous; and it is always unhappy, always flitting like a lost soul in the world, always tragically unsure of itself. Indeed it is always hankering to discover a god or a mystique or a form of self-immolation—liable even to sink back into astrologies, theosophies, and dark superstitions. It is arguable that the time is coming when Europeans will listen to the gospel with minds much more open than at the present day; for at the moment too many traces of the traditional order of things still linger with us, too many resentments and misunderstandings survive, some of them perhaps not entirely without cause. In Asia, moreover, secularism—especially that secularism which is imported from the West and is shaped to the rationality of the West—will be more vulnerable in the long run to the Christian challenge than the stony block of Islam has been during a period of over a thousand years.

A country in which primitive Christianity could make little headway was the Holy Land, because there it was confronted with the solid resistance of an entrenched Judaism. The realm that lay wide open for the advance of the early church was the tumultuous, highly urbanized, highly civilized, pagan Roman Empire. The hungers, anxieties and nostalgias which favored the success of Christianity in the Roman Empire are just the things which seem to reappear in an extraordinary manner when we examine the underside of modern secularism.

For definite historical reasons, which cannot be regarded as normally repeatable, the European peoples suffered a kind of wholesale and official conversion to Christianity after the downfall of the Roman Empire. From the primitive stages of their history, these nations developed their society and their civilization under the presidency of our religion and under the wing of an authoritarian Church. The process was not a unique one but appears to have been typical of what happens during the formative period in the history of a civilization; and another large area of the globe developed in a curiously parallel way under the inspiration of the Mohammedan faith. When societies reach a certain stage of development, however, the ascendancy of the presiding religion (unless it is exercised with greater wisdom than men usually possess) comes to be felt as a serious constriction. And in a sense it was because the medieval Church had done its work so well that the cry for emancipation was a call for liberty within the religion itself—essentially a call for freedom of conscience. If this demand had been defeated, an authoritarian system would have hardened itself and the history of the European continent during the last four or five centuries would have been less turbulent. But the result would have been palsy and paralysis, like the case of those oriental religions which seem to last all the longer because they have frozen into the stillness and rigidity of death.

Ecclesiastical authority, first amongst the Catholics and then amongst the Protestants, did resist the aspiration for greater freedom, however; and one large aspect of the whole modern fight for liberty, at any rate down to the middle of the nineteenth century, has been a long series of battles against surviving forms of the ancient religious ascendancy. Until almost the other day, the Christian church still continued to draw interest on its old capital, so to speak, and continued to reap postponed profits from the system which it had built up during its long period of predominance. The control of education, the power of tradition, the force of convention, and even the effects of intellectual timidity or intellectual indolence prevented the results of the new order from appearing all at once. And in consequence of all this, it is only in the twentieth century that we can begin to say, on the whole, that at last no man is Christian because of compulsion, or because it is the way to power and office, or because of social pressure, or out of mere habit or intellectual laziness.

II

What we have reached, then, is the age of modern individualism; and in a sense it is an adult state of the world, with a greater responsibility resting on every single person as he makes his major resolutions about himself

and about life in general. It would be unfortunate if we were to hanker after more primitive ages in the past, when nations could be converted in a wholesale manner by means which were suited only to the childhood of the world. Christian principles imply so great a respect for personality, and the submissiveness they require owes so much of its essence to its voluntariness, that they call for an advanced state of society; and they have played their part in impelling the human race toward that realm of modern liberty which the timid sometimes deplore. It would seem to have been in the order of Providence that our medieval Christian civilization should proceed to what many Christians must have felt to be its own undoing —to that condition of modern freedom in which the church no longer has the dice loaded in its favor, and no longer has organized power on its side. The result is that it is harder to be a Christian, and the challenge is a higher one in every individual case; and now perhaps only the genuinely spiritual kind of religion can survive, since the nonspiritual inducements have been taken away.

It is not surprising that in the world of modern freedom the number of Christians should be vastly fewer than before; especially as we cannot claim that men are naturally Christian. The affirmation that each Christian makes is in a sense far more imposing than in former ages; since it is the effect of a more autonomous decision, and is made against the spirit of the world. In a sense Christianity has returned to its primitive state; and when we remember this we can realize that our task today is at least not an impossible one. The church confronted the Roman Empire without the instruments of power; and already in history it has shown that it is able to prevail by an authentic process of individual conversion in a highly developed, highly urbanized civilization.

If secularism in our time has been particularly resistant to the gospel it must be remembered that, apart from its exhilarating material achievements, and apart from the fact that it has not had time to discover its own bankruptcy, there are certain formidable obstacles, born of resentment and misunderstanding, which are operative for the time being and which have the effect of hardening men's hearts beforehand. Christian charity has the chance to remove the obstacles, provided it is not imagined that the task is an easy one. Viewed in its aspect as a mundane institution, the church itself is very much at the mercy of defective human nature; and during most of its history it has been established on a system that was calculated to give enormous leverage to all the cupidities of men. It is possible that the Christian revelation could hardly have existed in the world for half a day without

one man seeking to make money out of it, and another man seeking to turn it into a means of gaining power over his fellow creatures. If we were to picture the Christian faith being planted on this earth, and then were to try to conjecture all the possible ways in which human beings might abuse it, we should find on turning to history that not only had all these evils actually occurred, but the devil had been more ingenious than any of us could ever hope to be, and had produced others that were beyond our prediction.

The cause of secular civilization might be served in various ways, but it is not an ideal world that is produced when the ecclesiastic has so much mundane authority and privilege that worldly minded men take to the clerical profession as the means to riches and power. And how many people reading the New Testament would ever have predicted that the religion would become so established for fifteen hundred years that every citizen of a state was automatically a Christian, and if he tried to evade the system became the victim of persecution and atrocity? The truth is that on more than one critical occasion churchmen, when faced with a momentous choice, made the option in favor of an alliance with power; and we may say that the motives were understandable, that the decision was more appropriate to earlier stages in the history of society than it would be today, and that we ourselves might well have made the same errors. But in all ages of European history the spectacle of European society was sufficient to bewilder or depress the earnest Christian and to leave him feeling very much the way he feels in the twentieth century.

In all ages the redeeming feature of the story lay precisely where it lies at the present day—in the fact that amid the riot and tumult there were genuine Christians doing what they were always told they would have to do, that is to say, bearing their cross. And the ancient system has left a legacy of profound resentment, misunderstanding and alienation, of which the secular literature of the last two or three hundred years contains sufficient traces to prolong the prejudices and antipathies into new generations. It is a grave question whether any Christian ought to regret the departure of the ancient system or to feel that our religion is in distress because it has so greatly lost the alliance of wealth, power and fashion. So long as men think of Christianity as the religion of power and predominance their hearts are hardened against it beforehand; ours is a religion which is calculated to gain a certain compensation in strength, therefore, from what the world regards as weakness. And one of the primary functions of the church today must be to remove the obstruction, to dissolve the resentments and mis-

understandings. It is a question whether churchmen can do this without a frank confession of their own historic sins.

III

A glance at the whole traditional situation provokes a further question; for there are three aspects of the story which make one wonder whether the relationship between the church and the world has not been unsatisfactory in the past—whether indeed the new situation may not be strategically the stronger one.

Firstly, it is astonishing to see how often the ecclesiastical mind, in spite of its many virtues, has been wrong in its judgment of mundane matters, wrong in regard to some of the main issues of modern history, such as religious persecution, democracy, and modern science. It is true that we can make exceptions, or alternatively we can be subtle about the matter; but if we take as our standard only the things which both Protestants and Catholics strongly affirm at the present day, it is remarkable to see how wrong the main weight of clerical influence must often have been in recent centuries. In all this there was too much fear, and behind the fear itself there was even a concealed worldly-mindedness. Christianity was thought to be tied up with a certain kind of regime or a prevailing philosophy or a current set of mundane values. One of the difficulties that result from the establishment of the church as a vast organized interest is that the preservation of this mundane system becomes a considerable motive of one's activity and comes to be identified with the cause of religion itself. And in consequence of this one tends to be moved unduly by prudential calculations and even by fear lest the system of interests should suffer disadvantage.

Original Christianity, and indeed original communism, starting out without such a load, were able to move forward in the world without fear—able to follow their principles wherever these might take them, without apprehending any detriment to their vested interests. And perhaps it is not sufficiently realized that in the age of the Reformation the very magnitude of the mundane interests of the church, far from proving a protection, was a most serious danger for religion; since for a vast number of worldly-minded people it provided the very reason for turning against the traditional order.

Secondly, it is significant that the main exception to what has just been said was provided by the minority creeds, the religion of opposition. The most remarkable example would be the kind of religious nonconformity that existed in England, genuinely hostile to the established order, bitterly

resentful against it, and therefore predisposed to the criticism of the *status quo*. When we say that liberty, democracy, and social reform in modern history are derived from Christian principles, we have to remember that they came via this insurgent form of Christianity, and though the whole church may now claim a certain credit for them the prevailing ecclesiastical influence was often against them at the time. This in itself should be sufficient to convince Christians that mere number does not matter, and that the alliance of principalities and powers is capable of being a hindrance as well as a help. The great mass of adherents which the church has now lost were never of such unqualified use for the sake of their mass as was once imagined; especially as there has been a distinct tendency on the part of ecclesiastical leadership (in respect of everything save the most purely theological issues) to consider the mass of routine Christians and to cater for these, without ever coming to realize the great number of quixotically idealistic young people who are thereby alienated and who would have been stirred and inspired by the audacity of a great moral challenge.

Thirdly, one of the most humbling features of church history is the fact that so many great movements of modern emancipation and amelioration—including the achievement of so many of the things which the West now stands for, as against Soviet Russia—belong to the period after the close of the seventeenth century, when the church began to lose its leadership in society. If so much of modern liberty and welfare was born out of an opposition movement—out of religious nonconformity—a great deal of it was brought to actual execution by “lapsed Christians,” who had partly been alienated by the resistance of the churches to reform. And it appears to have been the case that by breaking with the church these lapsed Christians did actually experience a desirable loosening of the bonds. Freed from various constrictions and conventions, they sometimes saw better than churchmen themselves where Christian charity should carry us, and they launched out further on the practical enterprise of improving the world. These lapsed Christians easily forgot how much of their program had originally sprung from Christian roots, and to what a degree their ideologies were a direct secularization of a Christian outlook upon the world. But the importance of their role in modern history seems to clinch the argument that the relations between the church and the world in the earlier centuries of modern history were unsatisfactory; and that there has been too great rigidity in the ecclesiastical attachment to existing conventions, too much tenacity in the defense of the *status quo*, too great a fear of whatever might be new and strange.

We do not know that modern secularism, in its fears and anxieties, may not persecute Christians again even as in ancient Christendom, and that even in our Western world our religion may not be called upon to produce martyrs as in the days of the Roman Empire. But secularism is so bankrupt that it will never remain secularist; it will bury its head in cruel superstitions, as it is already beginning to do. And the Christianity which always insisted on Christ as flesh—not merely Christ as God—is the only path even to a good clean worldly-mindedness, since it drives out so effectually all the competitive forms of mysticism and idolatry. For Christians the moment has come when we may loosen ourselves from traditional bonds, and indeed we are being loosened from them whether we like it or not—so that here is an admirable moment for detaching the essentials of Christianity from the accidents of its history. For it is even a part of our case that the essentials of Christianity can be transposed to a civilization that never heard of Greece and Rome; and that all its implications may be developed in new, strange ways which it would be impossible for us to predict.

Furthermore, in spite of the ills which have been mentioned, the long story of Christianity seems to be in a particular sense the continuing revelation of the nature of God—a prolongation of the Bible itself, in fact. The existence of New Testament love and Christian humility and the knowledge of forgiveness of sins, the astonishing power of these things and the way they come to be vindicated over long periods, are like something supernatural imposed upon history; indeed they *are* something supernatural imposed on the whole human drama. In spite of all the defects of its human agents the church has never failed to keep the true flame of religion alight, or to feed the faith of pious men. And sometimes Christianity has been working for good in the world even while Christians themselves have been willful and have been working against that good. Not so much through the operation of ecclesiastical politics, but rather at a deeper level—through the church's influence on the assumptions that lie behind our whole order of things—Christianity has helped to build up even the mundane values of our Western world. It is precisely the essentials of our religion and the deepest things in our culture that are related to one another, and it is here that we discover the large part which Christianity (however greatly mixed with earthiness) has played in the history of our civilization. When the essentials of our religion have been disentangled, and the fundamentals of the spiritual life have been laid bare, we might very well confront the twentieth century and say, "Can such a faith offend?"

In any case, the lapsed Christian has possibly had his day as a his-

torical force; for as his children come along, and then his grandchildren, and then his great-grandchildren, we reach a situation in which there is nothing more of the Christian tradition to lapse away from. The things which the lapsed Christian overlooked (and particularly the theological virtues, the qualities in New Testament love, for example, which go further than mere natural love) then become of critical importance; and we discover how inhuman can be the life that is without them. The end of the process is the cruelty of modern paganism, the hollowness of the men who know nothing of the inner life. In the terrible conflicts which tend to characterize a blind world, where the materialism is without mitigations, only Christian love with its urge for creative understanding can bridge the chasms between vast organized masses of men. Christianity discovers a better role than the one it had before, for now, in a deeper sense, it brings a message of healing to torn and baffled societies. Modern secularism is not so sane or so self-consistent as to be able to stop the deeper hungers or satisfy the spiritual aspirations of men.

It would be wrong for Christians to feel lost because they have been robbed of the power of numbers or robbed of the feeling that the tide of the world is with them. The virtue of those factors in the past was partly illusory, and the long unanimity of European opinion in the Christian faith was never a genuine evidence for the truth of the faith, in view of the manner in which the unanimity had been produced and maintained. It would be wrong to complain that children can no longer be brought up locked in a religious system—Christians because they are never allowed to realize that there is any alternative. It would be wrong for Christians even to imagine that the decline in their apparent numbers necessarily signifies any real retreat, unless it is a retreat from the kind of worldliness that helped to produce the numbers. In confronting the present world situation we might breathe more freely in respect of one matter; for we have been emancipated from the worst elements of our own past.

John Amos Comenius

Pioneer of Church Unity and Teacher of Nations

EVE CHYBOVA BOCK

THE OUTSTANDING EVENT in the church life of Czechoslovakia during 1952 was the year-long commemoration of the 360th anniversary of John Amos Comenius, a great Czech religious leader noted for his work as an educator, church leader, worker for peace, fighter for political freedom, and pioneer of church unity. It had been virtually impossible for the Czechs to celebrate his 350th anniversary, because 1942 found them enduring their third year of oppression under the Nazi occupation. So in 1952 they decided to "pull out all the stops" and give a real reminder to the people of the significance of this notable man.

For some of the church leaders it seemed particularly important to deepen the people's understanding of the life and writings of Comenius at this present time. Christians behind the "iron curtain" are searching for that which is true and lasting in their faith in a period when the society around them is undergoing a revolution, creating trying times for the institutional church. Comenius, who lived during the chaotic times of the Thirty Years' War and who was an exile for many years, manifested the life geared to eternal realities while struggling with problems in a turbulent world.

Commemorating this religious pioneer, the weekly interdenominational paper, *Kosnicke Jiskry*, carried articles on him in each issue throughout the year. Many public lectures were given; several new statues of Comenius were erected; concerts of hymns he wrote were presented; art displays were arranged; many of his books were republished, and some, written originally in Latin, were translated into Czech for the first time. In three small towns in Moravia, the central province of Czechoslovakia, the old argument as to which of them was Comenius' birthplace flared up again. During the celebrations in Komna, one of the three, the mayor publicly asserted, "I regard as an enemy anyone who doubts that Comenius was born in Komna."

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It was this town that whitewashed all the houses before the celebration. The Communist government, while not particularly appreciating Comenius' religious contributions, lauded him as a great progressive educator, whose theories have found their most complete fulfillment in present-day Russian schools. They even issued a stamp with Comenius' picture on it, and recognized him in other ways.

It would be easy for Americans to overlook these celebrations, considering them to be purely Czech celebrations of a Czech hero. But that would be no more justified than to regard an observance of John Calvin's anniversary as a Swiss affair, or a celebration of Goethe's anniversary as a German affair. Comenius has certainly made a contribution of universal significance, and people from all nations are deeply indebted to him. That some of them realize it was evident at the Amsterdam conference of the World Council of Churches when Czech, Hungarian, and Polish delegations made a trip to his grave in Naarden, not far from Amsterdam. As delegates of many denominations and nations were preparing to declare that "we intend to stay together," these churchmen paid their respects to one who laid significant foundations for unity more than three hundred years before.

I

John Amos Comenius (*Komensky* in Czech) was born on March 28, 1592, as the youngest child of a rather well-to-do family. He had four sisters, but he was the only son. Little is known about his early life other than the fact that at the age of twelve he lost both parents and two of his sisters, probably through a plague. The years following this tragic event are rather obscure too, but he himself recalled them with great bitterness. When he was sixteen, he entered a Latin school in Prerov, Moravia, and made an excellent record as a student. Upon the principal's recommendation the Lord of the City, Count Charles of Zerotin, enabled the promising student to continue his studies abroad. So, as a youth of nineteen, he set out into the wide world, which in the years to come was to be his only home. For three years he studied at Herborn in Nassau and at Heidelberg, Germany. And after his return home (he walked all the way from Heidelberg to Prerov, some 600 miles) he became a teacher at the same Latin school where he himself had studied three years before. He was too young to be ordained a minister, and had to wait two years for ordination. Shortly before he obtained his first pastorate, he married a young lady of a good, wealthy family and moved with her to Fulnek, where his church, the *Unitas Fratrum* (The Unity of Brethren), had an important congregation.

The years at Fulnek were a happy, peaceful, and promising time. The congregation was flourishing; the work at the church-sponsored school, of which he was in charge, was enjoyable; his first writings were well received by both his superiors and the public; his wife bore him a child. There were some troubles, of course, mainly with the Catholic population of the town, but Comenius overcame them with such a gentleness and tact that it was said about him that he "had no gall." Nothing could provoke him to anger.

Already at this time he was laying foundations for his ecumenical work. In 1619, the young priests of the Unity presented to the Bishops a document, entitled *The Essay of the Young Priests of the Unity in Moravia*, in which they were suggesting a merger of their church with the Utraquists (Hussites), the other Protestant body in the country. Comenius was one of the co-authors of the essay. The only condition the young ministers asked for was the maintenance of high moral standards in the merged church. Summarizing their point of view, they proclaimed, "If that could be accomplished and order and discipline were introduced into the Protestant church, our Unity would perish gloriously, that is, she herself would cease to exist; but it is better that good order be among all than among some only."

It is not surprising that the young ministers dared to present a proposal of such a kind to the leaders of this church. As the name "The *Unity of Brethren*" suggests, the church strongly favored Christian unity; and by both her practice and her theology she often showed an example of how a union could be accomplished. She was one of the very few churches after the separation from Rome that did not proclaim herself to be the only true church. It is quite amazing to read, in those times of fanatical denominationalism and religious fights, an official proclamation of a church such as this: "*Thus believing according to the Holy Writ in a Holy Church, we do not hold that we alone compose the Holy Catholic Church, or that salvation is obtained only among us, or that we alone should be saved.*"

Also on the practical level the Brethren showed examples of co-operation with other Protestants. In 1575 they agreed with the Utraquists upon a common confession, and in 1609 the two formed a single religious organization in which both parties preserved their own church government and some ecclesiastical usages. The proposed merger was another step toward unity but the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War prevented its fulfillment. Twice the Brethren conferred with Luther, who approved their confession, and dismissed them with the words: "Be ye apostles of Bohemia, while we will serve Germany." They also were on friendly terms with the Calvinists, and sent their students to the Reformed schools in Germany. The school in Herborn, at which Comenius studied, was one of them.

In a place called Elbing, in Prussia, three churches (Lutheran, Reformed, Unity) worked out an agreement through the leadership of the Unity in which they proclaimed that the doctrines of the other parties did not contain any heresies for which they should be attacked. From then on they lived peacefully next to each other. This practical example of co-operation and brotherly love was of great significance, and churchmen from different parts of Europe were pointing to it as to a morning star, showing the possible way of reconciliation.

It was in such an "ecumenically minded" denomination that Comenius began and continued his ministry. The promising early years in Fulnek came to an end with the outset of the Thirty Years' War. Armies of various nations were marching through the country, and during one attack the city of Fulnek was destroyed by a Spanish division. Comenius lost his home, and later was forced to flee the town. His wife, however, was not able to leave with him, since she was expecting another baby. Comenius never saw her again. Both she and the two tiny children died of the plague. Thus for the second time in his life, his family was wiped out by the dreadful disease.

Comenius found shelter in Bohemia on one of the estates of Count Charles of Zerotin, his benefactor from student days. While hiding there he wrote one of his most famous books, *The Labyrinth of the World*, a classic of Czech literature. The book, picturing a pilgrim who seeks peace and happiness in the midst of a muddled and deceptive world and finds them at last in union with Christ, was an endless source of encouragement to the Protestants in their sad plight. When later they were forced to leave their country, they sang:

Nothing have we taken along, all into flames hurled,
but the Bible of Kralice, and the *Labyrinth of the World*.¹

In the summer of 1624 Comenius married his second wife, the daughter of a Bishop of the Unity. But this was a single happy event in that hard, dismal time. It soon became evident that the hiding place on Count Charles' estate would not be safe, and the Brethren prepared to leave their country altogether. Comenius and another priest were sent to Poland to find out if the exiles could settle down, at least temporarily, in the city of Leszno, where the Unity had a large congregation. They accomplished their duty successfully, and when the expected law was passed declaring Protestantism illegal in the Bohemian Kingdom (including Moravia), Comenius and the other priests and members of the church left their native land. Little did they think that they would never see it again. They all cherished hopes of returning as soon as the situation changed.

¹ The Bible of Kralice is the classical Czech translation of the Bible.

II

Leszno became Comenius' home for many years. Several times he interrupted his stay there by long travels abroad, but he always returned. It was during the first few years of his residence there that he became world-famous. It was his work in education that brought him most fame, though, as he humbly confessed, it was by a mere chance that he became an educator. His great success was a surprise to him.

Comenius felt there was a basis for hope of a speedy return to Bohemia, and his ardent aspiration was shared by the other exiles. Dissatisfied with the conditions of Czech schools, he started to write a comprehensive book on education, called *Didactica Magna*. He wrote it originally in Czech, and kept on postponing its publication until his expected return; but as years passed and the situation did not change, he finally rewrote the book in Latin. Though it contains a number of errors, it marks a milestone in the history of education, and many an authority recognizes it as the basis of the modern philosophy of education.

In the *Didactica* he placed chief emphasis on the proposition that education should follow the natural development of the child, and should proceed from the simple to the complex, from the known to the unknown. He pleaded for a gentle discipline, stressed the use of the mother tongue rather than Latin for children, and emphasized practical study (things to do and things to make) rather than the theoretical or purely humanistic studies then in vogue, which were beyond the comprehension of a small child.

It was not the *Didactica*, however, but another book of that period that made him famous overnight. It appeared under the Latin title, *Janua Linguarum Reserata*, which means "The Gate of Languages Unlocked." It was a sort of textbook of languages, and had such a success that it was shortly translated into twelve European and four Asiatic languages. The English translation appeared also in America, and the Indians learned English from it! Comenius received a great number of congratulatory letters, and was counted among the greatest scholars of his time.

But in spite of his success as an authority on education, he never ceased to regard his duties as a minister as the most important. He had different tasks in the church, from being the secretary of the whole body (which included writing and publishing the church documents) to being in charge of the theological students studying abroad. But his manifold activities did not solve his financial worries, since all the work for the church was unpaid. So he had to support himself by writing: in fact, he even raised funds for the church in that way.

As a vital part of his writing and church work, he carried on the crusade

for interchurch co-operation and understanding which he had begun in Moravia. Faithful to the teaching of his church, he stressed personal piety and purity of life more than theology. He showed a remarkable broad-mindedness about the two main matters of dispute among Protestants—the Lord's Supper and the doctrine of predestination. About the Lord's Supper he said:

Whether this sacrament is received by the mouth or by faith alone, why do ye quarrel about it? Why do ye wish to discuss that about which the Scriptures are silent? . . . Remember that we all know only in part, and especially remember that this mystery was ordained not that the hearts of believers may be torn asunder thereby, but rather be bound together into one.

As for predestination, he advocated searching the Scriptures. As they furnish grounds for both sides, he contended that there must be some truth in both views; therefore the two sides should respect each other and not fight each other.

He also made the suggestion that all the religious parties drop the names by which they called themselves—Lutherans, Calvinists, Hussites, etc.—as by such names they showed that they followed only a human leader. If they really wanted to follow Christ, they should simply call themselves Christians.

Comenius remained faithful to his idea of Christian unity all his life. Years later, when he wrote a small book called *The Bequest of the Dying Mother, the Unity of Brethren*, he again expressed it, and this time in an unusually beautiful way. He wrote at a time when all hope of returning to his native land and re-establishing the perishing church had faded away. That is why he presented the Unity as a dying mother, who, "if the Lord should confirm what men do, must prepare for her last sleep," and who therefore bequeaths to different churches and groups "the treasures that God entrusted to her."

To all Christian churches together I bequeath a lively desire for unanimity of opinion and for reconciliation among themselves, and for union in faith, and love of the unity of spirit. May the spirit which was given me from the very beginning by the Father of spirits be shed upon you all, so that you would desire as sincerely as I did the union of all who call upon the name of Christ in truth!

III

Comenius not only worked toward Christian unity himself, but he also supported all attempts of other ecumenical workers. Important is his friendship with John Dury, son of a Presbyterian minister at Edinburgh, who took up the idea of the unification of Protestants as his life's task. He traveled all over Europe, trying to win rulers and church leaders to his project. No

wonder that he was well received in the Unity, which ordered public prayers in all congregations for the good outcome of his work. Dury wanted to collect all books concerning church unity, and on the basis of that study to propose what should be done to bring the project to a successful end. But he also wished to become personally acquainted with the different churches and church leaders, so that, as he says, "we may know what use may be made of them in good works and what may be feared from them." But his project failed completely.

Comenius became acquainted with another ecumenical worker, Georg Calixtus, at an ecumenical conference in 1645. Calixtus was professor of dogmatic theology at the University of Helmstedt, and he even hoped to unite the Protestants and the Catholics. As the basis for a union he proposed "what has been believed always, everywhere, and by all," namely, the Bible and the consensus of the first five centuries. But the conference, held at Thorn, Prussia, clearly demonstrated that Calixtus' plans were a mere dream. Catholics, Lutherans, and Reformed were all there; but it appeared at the very beginning that none of the three parties was in a conciliatory mood. The first meeting was opened by the prayer of a Catholic bishop. The Lutherans insisted that all three parties should take turns in opening the meetings, but the Catholics wanted the right reserved exclusively to themselves. Then the Lutherans decided to have their opening prayers separately in another room. Comenius bitterly complained about some Lutherans that they "know nothing, but call down fire from heaven upon both the papists and the Calvinists."

There were additional difficulties in relations with the Catholics. In his autobiography, Comenius presents the following conversation between Zbygniew Gorajski, the leader of the Reformed, and Prince Ossolinski, leader of the Roman Catholics:

"Will all parties be guaranteed full freedom of action?" Gorajski asked.
"Our conscience is bound," replied the Prince.
"Ours is also—by God and his word."
"Ours is bound by the Church," answered the Catholic.
"The Church is composed of men, but God is God; it is fitting to obey God rather than men."
"We are told: 'obey the Church.'"
"Then what is the purpose of carrying on these conversations?"
"The purpose is to make you learn to imitate us in obeying the voice of the Church."

The Catholics demanded unconditional return of the Protestants into the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church, which, of course, the Protestants found absolutely unacceptable. The Reformed representatives entitled their

statement, "A Closer Explanation of the Catholic Faith," but the Catholics objected vigorously, claiming that they alone had the right of using the word "Catholic."

Comenius, who along with other representatives of the Unity was counted among the Reformed delegation, was faced with the difficult task of persuading the leader of the Lutherans, Dr. Johann Hülsemann, to co-operate with the Reformed during the negotiations with the Catholics. It is only natural that it was a member of the Unity who was given the task of mediating, because, as was pointed out before, the Unity was ecumenically minded and had some practice in mediating between the two Protestant bodies. And no one from the Unity was better equipped to mediate than Comenius, since the idea of unification was so close to his heart, and since he was equipped with great tact, patience, and gentleness. Yet even he did not succeed. He had two discussions with Hülsemann, but in vain. Hülsemann was stubborn, and would not yield in any respect. There is no doubt that he personally was largely responsible for the failure of the conference.

IV

As years passed, and the ecumenical efforts were failing, Comenius conceived a dream of uniting the world through education, hoping that this might make the churches get closer together. He had in mind a vast educational program, directed from one headquarters and spreading throughout the whole world by means of common schools using common textbooks written in a common language. This education was supposed to furnish to all people the summary of all the knowledge of the world, presented from the same point of view, so that misunderstandings and double meanings might be eliminated. The plan is usually referred to as "Pansophy." However fantastic it sounds today, it stirred up a tremendous interest and many distinguished scholars offered their help and support.

Pansophy was built on three principles: (1) the inductive method of Bacon, (2) the use of reason (where the five senses fail), (3) the divine revelation (where reason fails). Its ultimate goal was the knowledge of God. On the basis of this program, Comenius developed his conviction that all people were capable of education, i.e., of being led into the truth. Since truth is one, pansophy would unite the world, and harmony would be achieved. Also the various confessional interpretations of Christianity would be swept away.

A friend of Comenius, Samuel Hartlib, aroused interest in the idea among some members of the British Parliament and several important church leaders, and in 1641 Comenius was called to London. He arrived

there in September and made his home in Hartlib's house. His host, who had known him through correspondence only, soon found out that in spite of his fame as the "Teacher of Nations," his guest was just a poor, modest priest who by his appearance certainly would not make a favorable impression on the lords and the high clergy. Therefore, he called a tailor and ordered him to make quickly a gown "in the fashion customary among English divines," so that his guest might have a suitable outfit to wear for the dinner given in his honor by John Williams, the Bishop of Lincoln.

The Bishop, who shortly afterwards became the Archbishop of York, was a great supporter of Comenius' pansophic ideas, and invited his guest to bring his family from Poland and settle down in London for good. He promised him an annual income, not doubting that other supporters would also raise funds for Comenius' work, and even the Parliament would contribute money. But Comenius had no desire to leave the needy flock of the Czech and Moravian exiles; and his wife, hearing about the proposal, "abjured him with tears that he should not take her so far away." But actually he was never forced to face the decision in all earnest. Before the Parliament assembled, the civil war broke out; and he never had a chance to explain his pansophic plans to the "honourable, pious and learned Assembly" before which he was supposed to appear. He left London not having accomplished any of his original plans.

But this trip to England was not completely fruitless after all. Out of his ideas about a pansophic college—the headquarters from which the educational process of the world was to be directed—grew later, in Britain, the famous learned Royal Society. He also became better known in the English-speaking world, not only in England, but also in America.

Another result of his trip to London was the offer of the presidency of Harvard University. The story is recorded only in one place, Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana*, and there is some doubt about its accuracy. Nevertheless, there must at least have been some discussion about Comenius as the President of Harvard. This is the account that Cotton Mather gives:

That brave old man, Johannes Amos Comenius, the fame of whose worth has been trumpeted as far as more than three languages (whereof everyone is indebted to his *Janua*) could carry it, was indeed agreed withall, by our Mr. Winthrop in his travels through the Low Countries, to come over into New England, and illuminate this Colledge and country in the quality of a President. But the solicitations of the Swedish Ambassador, diverting him another way, that incomparable Moravian became not an American.

It is not surprising that Comenius refused the American offer. Harvard, which had been founded only five years before, had no special attraction

for him; neither did he know English. And, above all, at that time he was still hoping for return to his native land.

But America was not the only country that was eager to welcome the famous scholar on its soil. Another offer came from France, and it was none less than the famous, powerful Cardinal Richelieu who was inviting him. But Comenius refused the French offer as well. He chose to go to Sweden, where he was invited by a wealthy merchant of Dutch origin, Louis de Geer. There is no doubt that the main reason for his acceptance was political: the Swedes, engaged in the Thirty Years' War, were the most powerful opponents of the Hapsburgs. Comenius cherished hopes that they might help the exiles to a return home.

After his arrival in Sweden, Comenius was introduced to a number of important people, even to Queen Christiana. The Queen received him cordially, feeling that she was indebted to him; for she had learned Latin out of his textbook. Comenius had a number of discussions with the great Chancellor of Sweden, Axel Oxenstierna, and was offered the post of reformer of the Swedish school system. He accepted only reluctantly, knowing that it would be a long and difficult task; and he hated to abandon his promise to his English friends that he would continue his pansophic work. But having the political implications of his stay in mind, and being financially so well provided that he could even support the priests and bishops of his poor and struggling church, he finally accepted. He made arrangements, however, to live in Elbing, Prussia, which was about halfway between Poland and Sweden, thus enabling him to keep in contact with both. He brought his family there and stayed for six years.

On the whole, he was greatly disappointed in the way things worked out. The task imposed on him prevented him from working on his pansophic plans, but, what was far worse, the Swedes abandoned the cause of the Bohemian exiles and by the peace treaty of Westphalia recognized the existing "status quo" in central Europe.

V

When Comenius learned about the terms of Westphalia, his grief overflowed. Just before the treaty was signed, he had written a pathetic letter to the Chancellor Oxenstierna, begging "by the wounds of Jesus Christ that ye do not abandon us, who are afflicted for Christ's sake." But everything was in vain. Comenius, and the whole Unity, realized that the treaty had put an end to every and any chance of return. So he accepted with a broken heart the fact that their church would never be re-established, but would perish with the scattered flock of exiles. It was at this time that

Comenius wrote his *Bequest of the Dying Mother, the Unity of Brethren*; so clearly did he, the last Bishop of the Church, see the end coming.

He returned to Leszno the same year the peace treaty of Westphalia was signed, 1648; but already in the following year an offer came from Hungary to go to that country and reform their schools. The letter of invitation came from Prince Sigismund Rakoczy, brother of the reigning monarch. He had again a faint hope that some help might come to his beloved nation and church through this powerful reigning family. But tragedy struck and ended all hopes. Two months after he had officiated at the marriage of Prince Sigismund to Henrietta, the daughter of the former Czech king, Frederick, she died, and four months later Sigismund himself followed her in death. The prince was buried on Comenius' sixtieth birthday, March 28, 1652, and the brokenhearted scholar took leave of him by an elegy to the words from Ecclesiastes 1:5, "The sun also riseth, and the sun goeth down." Indeed, for awhile, Sigismund had been a sun shining on the cloudy horizons of Comenius' life.

During his stay in Hungary, Comenius had a chance for the first time in his life to put his educational theories into practice. Though he was greatly disappointed in the results of his efforts because of inability of the backward people to accept his reforms, he had great success with two books, which, like the *Didactica* and the *Janua*, are milestones in the history of education: *Orbis Pictus* (The World in Pictures), which is the first illustrated textbook in history; and *Schola Ludus* (The School, a Play), which gives instructions on how to make learning enjoyable for students: how to arouse interest, how to use dramatizations, and so forth.

Comenius returned to Leszno in the summer of 1655, hoping to settle down at last to his pansophic writings. But he arrived almost on the eve of the Swedish-Polish war. The first victories of the Swedes revived in him (for the last time) hopes of a return, but the situation soon changed. The Swedish regiment was forced to leave Leszno, and on April 29, 1656, the Polish army marched in and burned the flourishing city to the ground. A friend of Comenius reports that Comenius "hath nothing left but the clothes on his back." His treasured library, his manuscripts—many of them ready for publication—and all his other possessions, everything was turned into cinders.

VI

Once again the old man—he was over sixty-four now—had no place to lay his head. Finally, he was offered an opportunity to live in Holland, at the house of Lawrence de Geer, son of the rich merchant who years

before had invited him to Sweden. There he spent the rest of his life, editing his educational works, writing a few more pamphlets, and caring for the scattered exiles as much as a man in his position could. But though from the human point of view the work of his lifetime lay in ruins, and he himself was nothing but a homeless pilgrim in a foreign land, he never became bitter and never changed any part of his life philosophy. When at seventy-seven he wrote his last beautiful and profound book, *Unum Necessarium* (The One Thing Needful), he expressed there again many of his basic ideas, some of which he had been working and fighting for all his life. Once again he called people and nations to mutual understanding and peace, writing words that many a modern politician and statesman should be aware of: "The easiest way out of trouble is—not to start a war. To wage a war is more difficult, and to win it still more. And in every war there is something beastly, whereas to humans humanity is becoming."

More than half a century before, Comenius had written in a similar vein in his pamphlet, *The Sorrowful*: "But tell me, why are you not horrified when you hear of a war or a plague in Asia or Africa? Only if it is in Moravia or Bohemia, then you lament and cry? Oh, no, not like that: whenever people of the same blood dwell, is your fatherland."

But Comenius was not calling for peace at any price. He himself fought against the peace of Westphalia, realizing the great injustice that it represented. No disappointment was able to shake his absolute belief in the final victory of the just cause of the Czech nation. When at one of the hardest moments of his long, sorrowful life he wrote *The Bequest of the Dying Mother*, he expressed this belief in words which have become sacred for the Czech nation: "I trust God that after the passing of the storm of wrath which our sins brought down upon our heads, the rule of thine affairs shall again be restored to thee, O my Czech nation."

Nearly three hundred years later, when President Thomas G. Masaryk made his first address to the Parliament of the liberated nation, he quoted these words of Comenius and pointed out that at last his hope had been realized. And today the people of Czechoslovakia are again going back to gain strength from the wisdom and faith of a man who freely offered and still offers his ideas and convictions to all people and nations.

"We proudly call ourselves the nation of Comenius," wrote the editor of the Czech paper, *Kostnické Jiskry*, in the first issue of the "Comenius year." "May God grant that it is not a vain pride, but that each of us might have at least a fraction of his great faith, his tireless diligence and his unquenchable effort to achieve unity among the churches and to secure justice and peace among all nations of the world."

Jesus and the Natural World

FRANCIS J. HANDY

JESUS WAS ESSENTIALLY a man of the countryside. All his deep spiritual experiences and all the most significant events of his life occurred in the open air. A river provided the setting for his Baptism, a desert for his Temptation, a mountain for his Transfiguration, a garden for his Agony, and a hill for his Crucifixion. True, "as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read," but there can be no doubt that the rostrum of his choice was a green bank, a village well, a stand in the market place, or a boat pushed out a little way from the shore. Wherever men congregated, that place he transformed into an auditorium for the proclamation of his gospel. His Sermon on the Mount was an open-air manifesto.

When we recall that the Synoptic records are but fragments, we are impressed by the number of references in his teachings to the common things of the natural world. On almost every page of these records there is some reference to bird, flower, beast, or seed. Obviously Jesus had watched the vulture hovering in the azure deep of the Syrian sky, and a hen mothering chicks. He had seen the vineyard workers with their baskets going up and down between the vines, and the hooded shepherd carrying the lamb in his arms down the hillside. He knew the potentiality of a grain of mustard seed, and the many difficulties confronting the crop-farmer.

It may be argued that these references reveal a peasant-husbandman rather than the usually pictured peasant-craftsman, but the distinction need not necessarily be drawn. Jesus was an observant man. Unlike the medieval saint—was it not St. Bernard?—who walked all day beside Lake Geneva without noticing that there was a lake there at all, he had an eye for everything about him. Clearly portrayed in his teachings is the flat-roofed cottage of the East with its mud walls through which thieves may dig and enter, its dim interior where a housewife who has lost a coin must light a candle to provide her with sufficient light to find it. Little imagination is needed to build up a picture of everyday life in a country village of his time. We may see the overburdened pack-animals making their weary way

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through its main highway while the women sit outside their homes grinding corn or mending clothes; the children playing in the market place where merchants display their goods and haggle over prices; the beggars sitting near the doors of the homes of rich men inviting alms, while masterless dogs wait expectantly to share in any of the scraps that may be thrown out. There are also pictures of the open road as it passes through the countryside or skirts the sea; the striking effect of the city built on a hill; the white-washed gravestones dazzling in the sunlight; the peasants performing the seasonal tasks of plowing, sowing, and reaping; and the fishermen hauling their nets full of fish to the shore.

I

Jesus looked out upon the natural world with an unsophisticated wonder and a spontaneous delight. The love of nature, strangely absent from most early Christian writings, was strong within him. If, as T. R. Glover argues in his defense of Paul,¹ "the ancients were not apt to expatiate, without provocation, upon scenery," the fact that Jesus did evince without provocation an unsuppressible delight in scenery is revealing. Of course, we may not expect to find anything urbane or studied in his attitude, seeing that what we understand by appreciation of nature was unknown even in Europe until the time of the Renaissance. His religious interest was dominant, and this heightened his instinctive and untutored response to the beauties of the world about him. In his expressions there is neither a multiplication of words nor an involution of thought such as we find in the Old Testament. Jesus states what he has seen with "marble simplicity and naïve delicacy," as, for example, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these" (Matt. 6:28-29).

To look for anything specialized or scientific in Jesus' approach to nature is to look in vain. His teaching contains no abstruse, technical, or speculative allusions. All his references lie consistently in the sphere of common observation, resting especially upon those things which were common to, and recurrent in, the everyday experience of his listeners. So far as we can tell, his scientific knowledge (or his knowledge of fact) was limited to that of his age and race. It may be assumed that he accepted without any intellectual hesitation the cosmological speculations of the first chapter of Genesis. At any rate, he made no attempt to correct any of the current Semitic notions concerning the universe.

¹ Glover, T. R., *Paul of Tarsus*. S.C.M. Press, 1938, p. 5.

In constantly referring to the common things of the natural world his central purpose was essentially practical. Jesus had a genius for picturesqueness and mnemonic aptness. If one of the aims of art is to reveal the beauty underlying the commonplace, it was the art of Jesus to take commonplace things in the realm of nature and to charge them with spiritual truth and moral beauty. What Stefan Zweig wrote about Charles Dickens may be applied in a true sense to Jesus: "He unveiled the poetry that was ambushed in the prosaic. . . . He gave to simple things and unpretentious people a glory all their own . . . he revealed where to find the everlasting spark in their uneventful lives, where to look for the glow of quiet joy hidden beneath the ashes of the familiar."² No one who had listened to him teach with an attentive mind could henceforth go through a day of average experience without being reminded of some spiritual truth or moral lesson he had associated with, or imposed upon, a homely scene or a familiar task. Who, for instance, having heard him tell the parable of the sower could ever again see a sower at work without recalling the lessons Jesus had taught about him? In thus transforming the rural occupations of his listeners into media of spiritual truth, and in filling each common day with familiar reminders of eternal realities, he revealed himself *par excellence* the teacher.

Both the poet and the teacher of a spiritual religion seek to image forth truth lying at the heart of things. The one apprehends truth in its esthetic manifestations and the other in its moral relationships. These two approaches to truth were inextricably interlaced in Jesus' mind. The love of truth as the beautiful and the reverence for truth as the good were bound together. To say of Jesus that he was a religious teacher with the soul of a poet, is to say that religious truth comes home most effectively in the form of poetry. Religion which is not poetry is either a formality or a theology, neither of which can touch the universal heart of man, lifting him above himself and making him aware of the divine spark in his make-up. Metaphor is the essence of religion. Take the similes, the figurative speech from the teaching of Jesus, and it becomes commonplace, its living spirit vanishes, and its power over the human heart melts away.

II

It is surely remarkable, however we may account for it, that there is no dualism in Jesus' thought of the natural world. Nature is God's world, the sphere of his creating power, shaping purpose, directing providence,

² Zweig, S., *Three Masters: Balzac—Dickens—Dostoeffsky*. Viking Press, 1930.

and redeeming love. An alien world, or a world of opposing forces, or a world divided into the natural and the supernatural is not to be found in the Synoptic records of his teaching. From the Old Testament Jesus took over the conviction that God's will is done in the natural world; and in so doing he gives it a characteristic turn of his own. In both apocalyptic and legalistic Pharisaism the thought of God's transcendence has been developed to such a degree that he was conceived as being apart from and external to the world. It was his creation and he sustained it and directed its purposes, but he acted on it from without and his activity was marked by his supernatural character. Hence it was thought that where man or nature acted the Divine was absent; where the supernatural operated the natural was superseded, and God's direct action from above was perfect and final. Priestly and institutional elements had influenced the development of the thought.

Jesus, however, believed that God was not only transcendent but also immanent, and that his activity in the cosmos was essentially from within. Nature, history, and human experience, as the great eighth-century prophets had taught, were the spheres of his continuous action through his Spirit. A sense of the immediacy of Divine activity pervades his teaching. What we would attribute to a secondary or efficient cause he always attributes to the direct activity of the Father. "Your heavenly Father feedeth them . . . shall he not much more clothe you?" (Matt. 6:26, 30), "One of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father" (Matt. 10:29, etc.). No third term appears in his cosmology; it is the Father who clothes the lilies of the field and feeds the birds of the air, not a mere "force" or "energy" or "law." Jesus' whole emphasis is on the personal relation of the Creator to his creatures.

In contrast with the general Old Testament view of nature which portrays Yahweh's sovereignty in terms of strength, majesty, and power, Jesus thought of the Father's sovereignty in terms of faithfulness, orderliness, and beauty. Where many Old Testament writers sought the manifestations of Yahweh's presence in the most violent and awe-inspiring convulsions, in the earthquake, wind, and fire, Jesus found the tokens of his Father's rule over nature in the commonplace things of the field. When he urged men to put their trust in the Father, he did not point to the miraculous, the occasional, or even to the stupendous manifestations of God's power, but rather to the ordinary things. He said that if only men would consider the flowers, watch the birds, and look into the sky they would find their faith strengthened.

The God to whom his rich and deep spiritual experience led him was also the God he saw revealed in nature. His heavenly Father and the heavenly King are one and the same person. This being so, and he had no doubts about it, nature's facts and laws were parabolic of, or analogous to, spiritual facts and laws. It is said that nature was the mirror in which he ever caught glimpses of the profoundest laws and operations of the higher life of the soul and of the character of God as Lord of both. Hence when he said, "The kingdom of heaven is like . . ." he was not exercising mere ingenuity of fancy or inventing fictitious similarities. Indeed, C. H. Dodd contends that the realism of the parables was not due to mere artistry but that it arose from a conviction that there was no mere analogy, but rather an inward affinity between the natural order and the spiritual order. Since they are in fact one order, "you can take any part of that order and find in it illumination for other parts . . . this sense of the divineness of the natural order is the major premise of all the parables."³

Jesus' unfailing perception of the spiritual analogy in the natural world was so deeply ingrained in him, that on the eve of his final appeal to the nation, when he realized that his failure to win it would probably end in his death, he expressed his unshaken belief in his mission in an image drawn from nature: "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." The quotation is from the Fourth Gospel (John 12:23-24) and it has all the characteristics we have come to recognize as being peculiar to that Gospel; nevertheless, the metaphor is in keeping with those of the Synoptics.

III

Serene with the confidence of one who has felt God's protecting care and has lived as in his presence, Jesus looked out upon the natural order as *theatrum Dei*, the stage of God's benignity and good will toward the creatures and things of his creation. The Father's will was done in the natural world because there was no other will competing with it. In the world of self-conscious beings, however, the situation was different. Men could and did pit their wills against God's will, so that in this world there was a discrepancy between what was and what ought to be. This distinction is clearly marked and we must take cognizance of it.

Even if we concede that Jesus' mission was a spiritual one which aimed at the enlightenment of the soul rather than at the enlightenment of the

³ Dodd, C. H., *The Parables of the Kingdom*. Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1936, p. 21f.

mind, we are still confronted with difficulties regarding his outlook on the natural order. He says nothing about those facts which fall within the range of common observation, a realm in which he was a careful and accurate observer, which we find most disturbing. The problem of suffering, the struggle to live, and the seemingly needless waste in the natural world are facts which we have difficulty in reconciling with his conception of God's benignity and good will. We are perplexed, too, because no word of compassion for, or recognition of the sufferings of, the lower animals is to be found in our records.

His silence could not have been stony or wooden. His tender compassion and loving sympathy and eager ministrations everywhere revealed in the records tell of a sensitive awareness of the pain of others. Nor could it have been due to a facile optimism. He faced realities realistically in his own life. He did not pretend that the skies were always blue, for we have his confession to his disciples that, on one significant occasion at least, his soul was exceedingly sorrowful unto death. And in steadfastly setting his face toward Jerusalem, he faced courageously the risk of the cross. It would be easy to solve some of our difficulties by declaring that his metaphysical presuppositions determined his outlook, but, knowing the man, we seek for something deeper and more satisfying.

In English literature, Thomas Hardy presents us with an interesting comparison and contrast. Hardy lived with nature on most intimate terms, and, in a personified sense, knew her moods, listened to her whisperings, and felt the beat of her heart. To change the imagery, however, and to express his thought in more realistic terms, nature was the stage—vast, mysterious, passionate, indifferent—on which man played his tragic part to no purpose. Brooding over the dark mystery of this unintelligible world, Hardy saw man with his loves and his hopes, his high strivings and great heroisms, caught in the relentless toils of

The purposive, unmotivated, dominant Thing
Which sways in brooding dark their wayfaring.

His métier was tragedy, but there was nothing cheap, mean, or contemptible about him, nor do his Wessex peasants mope and snivel and whine. On the contrary, there is something splendid in the spirit of his characters in their unyielding defiance against the onrush of unescapable circumstances. The natural world and the world of self-consciousness was all one to Hardy, it was a world in which the irony of Fate reigned supreme. He heard the sob of this world and sobbed with it. Poignantly he felt the waste of life through needless suffering, and he himself suffered intensely because frail

women and children with their menfolk were often caught up in the toils of tragedy through no fault of their own, and also because dire disasters fell upon the innocent. This moved him to a fierce irony and also to a deep pity. His was the philosophy of despair and darkness. The spirit of the night brooded over all, majestic, mysterious, ominous.

Jesus responded to the call of the morning, fresh, joyous, thrilling. He felt that it was good to be alive. In sun and rain he saw God's character of universal love. Irrespective of the merits or demerits of the recipients, God's bountifulness was unfailing: "For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matt. 5:45). Illustrations of God's unfailing care he saw in the bird creation, as for instance, "Behold the birds of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" (Matt. 6:26). Compare the outlook of this passage with that famous sentence which epitomizes Hardy's conception of human life on the stage of the world: "'Justice' was done and the President of the Immortals (in Aeschylean phrase) had finished his sport with Tess."

If we have difficulty with Jesus' view of the cosmic order, we instinctively revolt against Hardy's conception; and our revolt is not due to his constant and relentless satiric flogging of the gods so much as to the fact that, despite our difficulties, we know it to be untrue. Nature may present us with difficulties and embarrassing contradictions, but human experience testifies that at the heart of existence there lies an undeniably sweetness, which even if we have not yet fathomed it, no railing accusations against life can dislodge.

Riding adown the country lanes;
The larks sang high—
O heart, for all thy griefs and pains,
Thou shalt be loath to die.

In his conception of God's fatherhood, Jesus' evaluation of man and his view of the cosmic order go together. We may not accept his evaluation of man and reject his view of the natural order without becoming essentially pessimistic. D. S. Cairns describes Hardy's pessimism as resulting from his "futile attempt to derive human reason, nobility, and piety from a Being who is in effect lower and meaner than man. How could Hardy's mocking 'President of the Immortals' ever have created human beings like Tess and Gabriel?"⁴

⁴ Cairns, D. S., *The Faith That Rebels*. S.C.M. Press, 1929, p. 216.

IV

While it is beyond the scope of this study to discuss the problem of evil, it is pertinent to our theme to consider Jesus' teaching concerning God's providential goodness, which was, of course, the central thing he sought to illustrate in his references to nature. His approach, as we have already indicated, was religious rather than theological, practical rather than theoretical, concrete rather than abstract, and moral rather than philosophical; in short, his thought forms were Jewish and not Hellenistic. This means that we must take pains to understand his underlying ideas in his sense and not ours.

The *good* as it relates to man is to be thought of in terms of life in which man's highest possibilities may be achieved, rather than in hedonistic terms of happiness and freedom from pain. Jesus thought of the good life in terms of sonship with God the Father. It was a morally conditioned filial relationship, realized through man's repentance and faith, and expressed in the qualities of righteousness and love.

Goodness as it refers to God is to be thought of as a moral purpose with man's supreme achievement (living as a son of God) as its end, rather than as a tolerant, parental indulgence. This purpose embraces in its scope both the natural world and the world of self-conscious beings. Its motive is love, its means service, and its end the Kingdom of God on earth, i.e., the state in which the will of God is done on earth as in heaven.

Power, too, as it refers to God is to be thought of as his ability to act or function according to his nature (as revealed in Scripture), to accomplish his ends, which are the winning of man's loving trust and willing service, rather than as an omnipotent force entering from without to coerce man's obedience. Jesus never doubted God's universal sovereignty. It is both implicit and explicit in his teaching concerning the Kingdom; but he thought of God's power as something specific, determinative, and internal.

Hence he saw God's power demonstrated over nature not in the occasional, the extraordinary and the cataclysmic, but by this constant care over the meanest of his creatures. And in human life God's sovereignty was manifested, not by the hosts of heaven sweeping down on the forces of evil, but by the realization in those who accept God's rule of their ability to overcome evil with good. This power—the power of love in action—Jesus saw enthroned in the universe and believed that it must finally prevail. It may be that this understanding of Jesus' teaching will not solve all our problems, but it will clarify our minds and enrich them with his deep spiritual insights.

Christian Implications in Anti-Stalinist Novels

ALBERT ROLAND

SOCIAL CRITICISM in fiction has assumed many forms and moved in different directions at various times in our history. In recent years, an important group of writers introduced a new genre: the anti-Stalinist novel. Social criticism is here directed at Soviet Russia, at its internal organization, at the strategy and tactics it has followed in its drive toward world dominance. This type of fiction, of course, has nothing in common with the many concoctions catering to a current taste for political sensationalism. It attempts, instead, to face the problem of Communism today in the only way it can be dealt with effectively in the realm of ideas; that is, by soberly evaluating the situation and by making a spiritual affirmation which may offset the emotional appeal of Communism. These novels firmly condemn Stalinism not out of hysterical hatred, but because it has betrayed the earlier ideals of social justice and true freedom, because it has built a statal organization which oppresses the individual, because its policies have consistently been founded upon a terrible disregard for the human person.

In a way, these novels are the logical development of the social criticism of the thirties. In fact, in the best fiction of the thirties, social protest went beyond the mere advocacy of proletarian action against injustice and exploitation. There was a deep humanity in, say, *The Grapes of Wrath*, which lifted Steinbeck's novel from the level of propaganda and made it a significant expression of human experience. The warm, sympathetic grasp of the worth of man—every man—and the emotional recognition of human brotherhood were positive values; they were, and are, relevant to our experience. As such, they could give to a novel vitality and a validity transcending its immediate environment.

However, most of the proletarian literature of the decade of the Great Depression lacked that breadth of inspiration and that compassion

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which we find in the best works of fiction of the time. Stereotypes and Marxian clichés were insufficient substitutes for a deeply felt concern for the other, an essentially Christian love of one's neighbor. And as the thirties neared the end, it became increasingly evident that the problems of man and of his society had more than a Marxian dimension. They could not be approached merely in terms of structural changes in society.

At the same time, many intellectuals were questioning their own depression-time alignment with the Communists; like the hero of Malraux's *Man's Fate*, they were becoming aware of a widening discrepancy between Communist Party policies and their own ethical convictions. The Moscow purges and Communist sectarianism within the Republican ranks toward the close of the Spanish Civil War raised the first doubts and reservations. The Hitler-Stalin pact, the partition of Poland, the subjection of the Baltic states, the always more clearly autocratic involution of Stalin's internal policies, the subordination to Russian imperialism of international Communist strategy—all contributed to shatter the myth of the "Fatherland of the Workers." Marxian Utopia, localized in time and place, lost much of its driving force; and when subjected to the test of empirical observation it failed to live up to the great expectations raised in 1917 by the Russian Revolution.

The realization that Stalin's regime had failed to bring about an era of justice—to affirm in the concrete structure of society the dignity, equality, and freedom of men—called for a fundamental revision of much that the thirties had taken for granted. Most important of all, it led to questioning the assumption that values are mere reflections of the economic organization of society, and finally to reasserting man's spiritual dimension. The concern over production and distribution of goods receded into the background; the central problem became the preservation of man's ethical integrity in a society bent upon complete dehumanization. And while the elimination of economic injustice remained a most important goal for such writers as Koestler, Silone, and other disillusioned Stalinists, the connections between this problem and the traditional values of Christian civilization became more and more evident.

In the novels by this group of writers, the predicament of twentieth-century man is seen to have a complexity which the easy Marxism of the thirties had ignored; and solutions, when any are prospected, are never simple tactical blueprints for revolutionary action. Whether the outlook is one of total hopelessness or leaves room for hope, these novels all postulate the affirmation of certain values as the indispensable premise for a

human condition. As we shall see, those values are essentially Christian values; and in this aspect, the anti-Stalinist fiction of the forties reflects the changed intellectual climate of the decade, sharing its renewed search for spiritual values to give meaning to man's life and provide a coherent foundation for his society.

I

Among the writers discussed in this study, Victor Serge is perhaps the least known in the United States. He was not primarily a novelist; in fact, up to *The Case of Comrade Tulayev* his writing consisted mainly of political pamphlets, in which during the late thirties he severely criticized Stalinist policies. A Bolshevik member of the first congress of the Communist International, he had been later confined for many years in Siberia because of Trotskyite sympathies. Released at the instance of influential friends, among whom was André Gide, Serge went to France as a political exile. When the Nazis occupied France, he fled to Mexico, and here between 1940 and 1942 wrote *The Case of Comrade Tulayev*. He died in Mexico in 1947. Serge's active participation in politics during the first decade of Soviet rule in Russia makes his novel all the more valuable as a fictional portrayal of its political situation, and gives his criticism of Stalinism a basis of actual experience.

The opening pages of Serge's *The Case of Comrade Tulayev* confront us with the miserable lives of two men living in a crowded collective apartment in Moscow. Romachkin is a little bureaucrat obsessed with the injustice of society, evident in the new Soviet Russia just as it had been under the Czars. He appears on the verge of passing from inarticulate discontentment to rebellious action. His purchase of a Colt, in itself a forbidden act, would enable him to carry out his intentions of revolt; but at this moment he realizes that his basic cowardice precludes for him the possibility of action. It is Kostia, a young laborer increasingly disturbed by the injustice he feels around himself, who will articulate Romachkin's vague resentments by shooting down with that gun Comrade Tulayev of the Central Committee. After this, Kostia and Romachkin disappear from the scene, to return only at the close of the book.

In that framework, Serge encloses the main body of *The Case of Comrade Tulayev*, devoted to analyzing the behavior and mental processes of a number of outstanding Communist leaders. The Chief and the Political Bureau refuse to consider Tulayev's murder as an isolated act of violence and decide to build it into a major conspiracy. The characters are chosen in the persons of High Commissar for Security Erchov; librarian Rublev;

Regional Secretary Makayev; Trotskyite deportee Ryzhik; and Central Committee member Kondratiev. Only one of these men is a true oppositionist: Ryzhik is the one who stands up against the Party, refusing to confess anything, denouncing the betrayal of the Revolution of 1917 on the part of the new Stalinist élite. Obviously, suicide is the only way left for Ryzhik to express unequivocally his condemnation of Stalin's regime.

The case of Kondratiev is more puzzling. He is suspected of connections with Trotskyite elements in Spain, and slated for a role in the trial against the "assassins" of Tulayev. Kondratiev decides to speak out and to refuse his acquiescence in the process of corruption of the Revolution. Yet, although he does so, he is not jailed, but simply sent as the new head of a gold-mining enterprise in Siberia. We do not know what motivates the Chief's favoritism toward Kondratiev. It may be friendship, or admiration for a courageous will, or realization that he is not basically an oppositionist but still loyal. A number of clues seem to support this latter interpretation: for all his decision to resist the present trend of the Party, Kondratiev remains faithful to Stalin, ". . . You are still the leader of the Revolution, we have no one but you."

At any rate, the Kondratiev episode stresses further the total arbitrariness of the Soviet administration of justice, already so evident in the death sentences of the other three, Erchov, Rublev, and Makayev, none of whom is guilty, according to Western standards of justice. Through summary flashbacks into the lives of these three men, previous to their imprisonment, Serge portrays different "types" of Stalinist leaders, attempting to account for their subsequent capitulation before the Party.

Makayev is presented as sheer energy, totally unconcerned with ethical questions, able to understand only relationships of power; it is natural that when deprived of his status and confronted with the omnipotent Party he yields to superior force.

Erchov is a very different person; intellectually he is quite articulate, and well aware of what goes on around him; within the limits of his political safety, he even tries to administer justice in a somewhat humane way. There is no ethical center, however, to Erchov's life: an efficient party functionary, even if not as inhumanly efficient as he is expected to be, his only norm for action is expediency, while his private life is completely out of the Soviet context, in a sort of island of luxury and sensuous enjoyment. Arrested, Erchov soon gives up his brief flaunting resistance, in the hope that his condemnation may be not yet final: "One chance in a thousand. . . . We have to stay in the game."

As for Rublev, neither force nor hope of survival motivate his acquiescence in the tragic farce staged as the solution of the Tulayev case. His decision has long since been made: "I have lived my whole life only for the Party. Sick and degraded though it may be, our Party. . . . I have neither thought nor conscience outside of the Party. . . . I am loyal to the Party, whatever it may be, whatever it may do. . . . If I must perish, crushed by my Party, I consent." And Rublev will wait for death writing an analysis of the causes that determined the deterioration of the Socialist Revolution.

A number of other characters are destroyed in the course of the action, emphasizing again the arbitrariness of Soviet justice and the inexorable logic which asks of Stalin's dictatorship more and more victims. Particularly important is the end of Popov, who for quite some time is one of the main motors of the machine of oppression, and who is ruined by his daughter's protest against the imprisonment of Rublev. Like Kostia in the opening pages of the book, Popov's daughter Xenia revolts against injustice; and, like Kostia at the close of the book, she then returns to the fold.

The meaning resulting from all these capitulations before the Party is definitely ambiguous. If Makayev, Erchov and, to a certain extent, Xenia yield to pressure, Rublev's and Kostia's decisions are arrived at voluntarily. And it is somewhat strange that the old dialectician and the young worker are perhaps the two most successful characters in the book: the episode in which Rublev meets two old comrades of the revolutionary intelligentsia—and they do not talk politics but have a joyous snowball fight—is the most effective word in behalf of humanity that the novel offers. As for Ryzhik, it is true that he presents the intellectually most consistent indictment of Stalin's regime, but his doctrinaire woodenness fails to carry through Serge's message as a convincing fictional experience.

II

In many respects, *1984* is another elaboration of the essential theme of *The Case of Comrade Tulayev*, in clearer terms and in a technically far superior novel. Although *Life* magazine and most of the American press considered it merely an attack upon Soviet civilization, *1984* reaches through national boundaries to criticize a world-wide trend toward an uncritical mass civilization in which a self-appointed élite rules with no consideration whatever for the individual human being. Behind the bitter satire of *1984* is the varied, cosmopolitan experience of author George Orwell. Born in Bengal, he served in the Indian Imperial Police in Burma, but resigned

after five years because of his aversion for British imperialistic attitudes. During the late twenties and early thirties Orwell was—as one of his books tells us—“down and out in Paris and London.” He tutored, washed dishes, taught in cheap boarding schools. When the Civil War broke out in Spain, Orwell went to fight with the Loyalists. He later related his war experiences and his disillusionment with the Stalinists in a book that still is one of the best to come out of the Spanish Civil War. Orwell died three years ago.

The action of *1984* takes place in Airstrip One, only a few decades earlier known as England and now a mere subdivision of Oceania, one of the three powerful superstates which irremediably divide the world. Economic exigencies and the need to divert toward an external referent the hatred of the people subjected to absolute rule keep Oceania, Eurasia, and Eastasia in a state of perennial war—never resolved because it is fought at their faraway borders and because alliances among the three superstates shift so as never to allow victory. One of the important government agencies in Oceania is the Ministry of Truth, in charge of continually adjusting all records of past events according to the ever-changing exigencies of party expediency.

The protagonist of *1984*, Winston Smith, works in the Ministry of Truth, and outwardly conforms to party discipline, although he is becoming increasingly critical of it. The turning point of his interior rebellion occurs when he falls in love with Julia, another employee at the Ministry of Truth and a member of the Anti-Sex League. In Oceania sex is considered an unpleasant concomitant of reproduction, and love has lost today's meaning altogether; Winston and Julia are therefore guilty, and after a few months of furtive, happy moments together, they are arrested.

Knowing from the first that this was to be the result of their relationship, Winston and Julia had promised not to betray each other, not to renounce their love and with it their essential humanity. For their relationship is not just a little romantic spice in the novel, but its one important contact, the standard by which they can properly assess and condemn their distorted, inhuman environment. The party, however, is too strong; through the Thought Police it knows everything of their meetings and their conversations, it has not only anticipated but actually facilitated their opposition. The right combination of physical and psychological torture succeeds in extorting from Winston and Julia the ultimate betrayal.

The most terrifying feature of this process is that the resulting total renunciation of their ethical integrity is *voluntary*. It is true that they are

tortured, but when they do yield, their submission to the Party is willing; they have been molded so as to desire nothing but orthodoxy. Through its all-pervasive control the Party has eliminated even the wish to revolt, and if an individual still attempts breaking away from conformity, like Serge's Kostia and Xenia, he is easily spotted and made to want to go back to the fold.

What prevents any serious opposition is the lack of clear standards—of values. The perfectly organized propaganda machinery of the Party determines both past and present, and a state of continuous warfare provides an excuse for requiring unconditional loyalty and sacrifices while diverting to a convenient scapegoat those resentments which would otherwise be directed against the ruling class. Men thus become mere cogwheels which *must* fit smoothly into the state machine, because unquestioning obedience is supposedly essential to survive in the fight against a foreign enemy. We are not very far from Serge's world, where the rulers decree both crime and punishment, and where the strongest deterrent to opposition is the fear of playing into the hands of the "international bourgeoisie."

There is practically no hope, in either *1984* or *The Case of Comrade Tulayev*, that an appreciable social change may take place shortly and the terrifying trend toward such a mass civilization be reversed. Yet, the only decent pattern of individual action is to affirm the values of individual responsibility, of love, of human dignity. That is the necessary condition for ethical survival.

III

The condemnation of Stalin's regime and the postulation of individual ethical responsibility find perhaps their most stringent theoretical formulation in Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*. Budapest-born Koestler was educated in Vienna, later traveled through most of Europe, in Russia, in the Near East, taking up odd jobs, free-lancing, a correspondent for various newspapers, or simply roaming as a tramp. A *News Chronicle* correspondent in Spain during the Civil War, he was captured and sentenced to death by the Fascists, but British intervention saved him. At one time a Communist, Koestler has lived the crisis of conversion from Communism which is central to all of his work. Because of this, and because of his varied experience and international background, he is one of the best known anti-Stalinist journalists and writers.

There is little in *Darkness at Noon* that could not be successfully discussed in essay form; yet the concentration and intensity of its treatment give it an often effective dramatic power. Like Serge's Rublev, Rubashov of *Darkness at Noon* belongs to the old revolutionary intelligentsia, and is

arrested and accused of crimes which he in fact never committed. Koestler, however, probes more deeply into the psychological process underlying the Old Bolshevik's acquiescence in the Party's accusations. In the dialogues between the prisoner and the inquisitor, Rubashov's past behavior and conversations are inexorably analyzed in the light of his own premises. This probing reveals that, even if he were actually innocent of the crimes attributed to him, they would have been the ultimate logical expressions of his own attitudes. Consistent with his theoretical premises, Rubashov therefore acknowledges in public trial that the Party's accusations are true. But he also gradually comes to realize that the problems of man, of the individual man, involve more than the smooth, properly Marxian functioning of the social organism of which he is a part.

It is particularly relevant to our study that Koestler's criticism is based on the exquisitely Christian connection between sin and death. The Stalinist disregard for the individual and the cruelty which characterize the whole administrative apparatus derive from the failure to perceive the tragic seriousness of death. There is no possibility for ethics if Party expediency is the only norm for action and if human lives are evaluated purely in terms of their usefulness toward the attainment of party goals. And ethical integrity, together with the compassion it asks of each toward all men, is finally recognized by Koestler as essential to both the individual and society as a whole.

It is too late for Rubashov, after his lifelong dedication to the Party, to reject the principles which have informed all his conduct: the conflict between his old allegiances and his growing ethical awareness is resolved by a shot in the back of the head. The "Neanderthalers," the ruthless men whose every action and feeling and thought have been molded by the directives of Number 1 and the Party, are left to rule over the country of the Socialist Revolution. As in *The Case of Comrade Tulayev* and in *1984*, Koestler's final word in *Darkness at Noon* is a desperate affirmation in a situation where there seems to be no room for hope.

A quotation from Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*, expressing this valiant will to resist and fight against overwhelming odds, opens Koestler's later novel, *Arrival and Departure*. Here, however, the author's attitude has somewhat changed, and the book leaves us not with a word of despair but a definite opening toward hope.

The protagonist, Peter Slavek, is an ex-Communist escaped after heroic resistance from a Fascist-dominated country in Central Europe. In nearly two hundred pages, between his arrival in "Neutralia" and his

departure to take up the interrupted underground struggle, Peter Slavek goes through a complete reinterpretation and re-evaluation of his past behavior and motivations. He finds that the early pattern of rebellion against his father accounts for his revolutionary leanings, and that the guilt complex caused by a self-assumed responsibility in his brother's death explains his unconscious desire for martyrdom. Self-analysis and long, probing conversations with a strange woman friend purge Peter Slavek of his complexes, and he is about to set out for America to a new, comfortable life with the girl he loves.

At the last moment, however, he realizes that aside from any complex there is an urge deep within himself which asks for his participation in the struggle against injustice, to relieve the suffering caused to men by cruelty and misery. And he returns to Nazi-occupied territory and to his underground work in behalf of freedom and justice. About to leave on a British plane which will land him by parachute behind the enemy lines, Peter Slavek writes the girl he loves a letter: ". . . I'll tell you my belief, Odette. I think a new god is about to be born. . . . Praise to the unborn god, Odette. Don't try to divine his message or the form of his cult—this will be after our time. The mystics of to-day are as trite as the political reformers. For we are the last descendants of Renaissance-Man, the end and not the beginning. . . ."

The essentially Christian character of Koestler's position is even more evident in this book than it was in *Darkness at Noon*, although it still remains rather vague in its formulation. While he rejects both political dogma and science as sufficient foundations for moral behavior, and moves toward Christianity, Koestler fails to articulate his religious outlook in specific terms. Yet, for all his reluctance to declare himself a Christian, his "unborn god" is in many important ways that "unknown god" whose altar Paul saw on the Areopagus—and announced to be Jesus the Christ.

The centrality of personal engagement to ethics is clearly affirmed in the very plot-structure of *Arrival and Departure*, solving the contradiction in which Rubashov was caught and could not find a way out except in death. The solution is to reject party allegiance and to recognize brotherly love and compassion as essential values—however difficult it may be to determine what they entail in terms of actual behavior.

IV

These novels by Koestler, Orwell, and Serge criticize effectively Stalin's regime and the techniques of mass civilization, attempting a needed

theoretical clarification of some confusing ethical issues of our day. However, these anti-Stalinist writers tend to take an intellectual approach which does not always make for fully dimensioned characters, since they are forced into categorical molds to typify dialectical positions. Consequently, the writers we have so far discussed fail to produce consistently effective fiction, because too often their intellectual schematizations are not filtered through, and expressed in terms of, convincing human experience. The integration of intellectual articulation and emotional engagement into successful fiction is accomplished to a greater extent by Ignazio Silone, who shares Koestler's, Orwell's, and Serge's sharply critical attitude toward Stalinism and who has turned more definitely than any of them to a Christian conception of man and of his place in society.

Born into an aristocratic family of Southern Italy and educated in Catholic schools, Silone broke away early in life from family traditions and Catholic dogma. A youth of eighteen, he was editor of a Socialist newspaper and an ardent proletarian propagandist. When the Fascist movement began its drive for power, he was one of those who actively opposed it, and after Mussolini took over the government Silone still continued the struggle underground. His only brother was beaten to death by the Fascists, and Silone himself eventually was forced to leave the country, repairing to Switzerland where he lived in exile until the liberation of Italy. At present, he is one of the most influential leaders of Italy's democratic socialists—who are opposing vigorously both the Communist bloc and the right wing parties with their neo-Fascist appendages.

Silone's first novel, *Fontamara*, told the story of a peasant revolt against Mussolini's regime, and was full of the revolutionary optimism characteristic of the early days of underground struggle against Fascism. Only a few years later, however, *Bread and Wine* witnessed Silone's disillusionment with mere politics, tracing in the novel's protagonist the process from militant Marxism to doubt and finally rejection of political action as the one effective cure for the contemporary crisis.

Bread and Wine opens with Pietro Spina's return to his native Abruzzi after fifteen years of exile. He is planning to carry on underground in Italy the anti-Fascist activity in which he had engaged abroad, but his health fails him, and he is compelled to inaction. Disguised as a priest, away from his diocese for a period of rest, he settles in a small village not far from Colle, where the Spina family had resided for centuries. Among the villagers, Pietro Spina tries to find men who oppose the Fascist dictatorship, but ignorance, petty selfishness, the hard realities of the life of the very

poor raise a wall against which talk of revolution is of no avail. One after another, his attempts fail. Action, Spina decides, is the only effective means to convince the peasants that there is a better alternative to Fascism. He re-establishes contacts with his comrades in Rome, organizes a group of youths in the Abruzzi village where he is living, plans raids and acts of sabotage. His growing doubts as to the relevance of his ideological schemes to human reality must be resolved, and he hopes to find the answer within the concrete context of revolutionary action.

The contrast between the narrow tenets of Party doctrine and deeper, broader spiritual needs becomes, however, always more apparent. Spina's association with Don Benedetto, a former teacher of his, and with Cristina, a young girl of whom he grows increasingly fond, focuses this contrast and finally precipitates its solution. In both Don Benedetto and Cristina there is an evolution from strict Catholic orthodoxy to a simpler but far more vital Christian outlook. This evolution puts Don Benedetto at odds with the Fascist authorities and with the ecclesiastical hierarchy allied to them; it will eventually lead to his death at the hand of Fascist fanatics while he is breaking the bread and drinking the wine of the Lord's Supper. Cristina, who had once wished to become a nun and verbally still refuses engagement in society, discovers toward the close of the novel that she can no longer evade her earthly responsibilities; her end repeats the pattern of Don Benedetto's.

When Pietro Spina leaves the village, after his latest effort at revolutionary organization has dismally failed and one of his former associates has denounced him to the police, Cristina runs after him. She climbs up the snowy slope of the Appennine mountains to bring him woolen clothes and bread and wine. As she struggles through the snow, she thinks of when she will offer Pietro that bread and wine. It is then that a pack of wolves closes in on her, and the offering is no longer symbolical—no longer bread and wine—but is the sacrifice of her own life, just as for Don Benedetto in his last Mass. The action of the novel dramatizes effectively Silone's message, and together with the recurring Christian symbolism leaves no doubt as to the total meaning of the book. Beyond narrow Catholic orthodoxy and Marxian dogma, Don Benedetto, Cristina, and Pietro Spina stand together for a renewed Christianity which opposes all injustice and oppression, and is founded on true spiritual freedom and dignity and the love of the neighbor.

While *Bread and Wine* portrays Pietro Spina's gradual disillusionment with Marxian ideology and tactics, finally resolving his personal crisis,

The Seed Beneath the Snow provides a fictional representation of the "good life" according to the ethical conclusions of Silone's earlier novel. Its action begins where *Bread and Wine* ended. Pietro Spina avoids capture by the Fascist police through flight, hides in a miserable hut, then at his grandmother's mansion, then again in the house of a poor peasant. Finally he leaves Colle and stays for a time at a hotel in a neighboring town under the name of his uncle, famous in the annals of the Fascist conquest of Ethiopia. When he is about to leave again for abroad, accompanied by the girl with whom he has fallen in love, his friend Infante kills a man and Pietro assumes the responsibility for the murder. This is, in brief, the plot of *The Seed Beneath the Snow*. But such a summary misses the real meaning of the novel, which emerges mainly from the dialogue and from the cumulative impact of small episodes of the everyday life of Pietro Spina and his friends.

Many successful characters from the Abruzzi peasantry and gentry crowd the pages of *The Seed Beneath the Snow* and make it an excellent social record. But just two among them are with Spina at the center of the novel and get Silone's meaning through. One is Pietro's grandmother—the old, proud, good, devoutly Catholic Donna Maria Vincenza Spina. In her talks with Pietro, during his stay at the ancestral home, we see her go through an evolution somewhat similar to Cristina's and Don Benedetto's in *Bread and Wine*. She represents the best of the old order, the possibility for integrity and goodness within a century-old aristocratic tradition. She attempts to understand Pietro and comes to respect his attitude toward life, perhaps even to consider it as the truly Christian one. Yet she never can free herself from being a Spina, with all that the old name implies. It is inevitable that Pietro's spiritual development finally demands that he leave the Spina home to share with Infante the hospitality of the peasant Simone.

Infante, the deaf-mute considered by the Pietrasecca villagers "a sort of two-legged donkey in the service of the village," is the other main figure of *The Seed Beneath the Snow*, and in a way its most important character. There is more than a superficial resemblance between Infante and Dostoevski's *The Idiot*, and this affinity brings out sharply the Christian significance of Silone's novel. As in Prince Myshkin, in Infante we have humanity at its childlike best; not, as Pietro Spina explicitly warns us, a Rousseauian noble savage, but still a man who has not been corrupted by intellectual schematizations and who perceives reality in its essentials. These essentials are food and shelter and the warmth of fire on a cold winter night; but they are also integrity and brotherly love.

The simple life which for Pietro is the good life is no romantic escape;

it is a continuous, often very difficult personal engagement; it means being with and for the poor and the suffering, against hypocrisy, lust for power and material success, inhumanity in all its forms. Silone's Abruzzi is a long way from Arcadia, and its people smell, go hungry, suffer the many petty tribulations of the poor. The masterful portrayal of the corrupted Italian society at its Fascist worst enriches this complex background against which Pietro Spina and his friends raise their protest—by living the word of Christ. The seed here has not fallen by the wayside, nor on stony ground, nor among thorns; it has fallen on good ground, ready to sprout, beneath the snow. In his long pilgrimage Pietro Spina has left behind the Catholic orthodoxy of his childhood and the narrow Marxian dogmatism of his youth, to live by the exquisitely Christian values of brotherly love, integrity, simplicity, and the unwavering assumption of one's ethical responsibility.

Aside from Silone, who unequivocally asserts his relatedness to the Christian tradition, only Koestler—among the writers we have discussed—comes anywhere near making an explicit religious affirmation. These writers are reluctant to give a specific formulation to their religious beliefs, a clear credo. This reluctance may perhaps be explained by their experience with Communism, in which they had earlier believed and which had promised justice and true freedom, the advent of a Kingdom of God here on earth. Their allegiance to Communism was not based on a political evaluation but on faith in an Absolute. Their disillusionment was brought about by the failure of historical reality to live up to that Absolute. Having witnessed once man's abortive attempt to make a god in his own image, localized in time and place, they now refuse to give the Absolute even a name. They agree with Don Benedetto, who in *Bread and Wine* tells Pietro Spina: "He does not attach very much importance to His name; on the contrary, at the very beginning of His Commandments He ordained that His name should not be taken in vain."

Nonetheless, we have seen how these novels are founded upon definitely Christian values. Their ethics are Christian ethics, and their outlook on life ignores any one confining religious orthodoxy, but for all their individual variations it is clearly aware of the spiritual dimension of man's life. Back from Moscow, these anti-Stalinist writers have found again the essential, vital significance of Christianity.

Theological Gamesmanship

*How to Win a Theological Discussion Without Knowing Anything, or,
The Art of Using Imaginary Lances to Demolish Real Windmills*¹

ROBERT McAFFEE BROWN

(Note: Theologians are, or ought to be, familiar with the books by the British author, Stephen Potter, entitled *Gamesmanship*, *Lifesmanship*, and *One Up-Manship*, published in America by Henry Holt. These are among the most acute exploitations of the fact of original sin which have ever appeared in print. Mr. Potter applies the universal human desire to be on top, or "one up," to almost every field of human activity. He has not yet, however, done justice to the theologians, and the following essay is a modest attempt to fill this lacuna.)

FEW theologians, save the Men At The Top, really know as much as they need to know, or, more important, as much as they need to give the impression of knowing. If they are fully informed on the history of Tischendorff's second visit in quest of the *Codex Sinaiticus*, or the extant correspondence between Zwingli and the Burgermaster of Dort, it is usually because this was the field of their doctoral dissertation twenty years ago.

And yet daily in the classroom, at annual meetings of learned societies, at conferences, in informal discussions, the theologian is expected to converse learnedly on the most recent developments in biblical history, patristics, doctrine, liturgics, oriental religion, and metaphysics, not to mention psychology and anthropology. How to help him? What to do when confronted by the unanswerable question? How to engage in a conversation about a topic on which one is totally ignorant, and still emerge as the most penetrating commentator? It is to deal with such serious questions as these that the present essay is offered.

"Okay" Words. Every theologian must have at his disposal certain words which can be introduced casually into discussion in such a way as

¹ Frequently known as Inverse Quixote-ism.

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(a) to indicate general knowledge, but not in such a way as (b) to elicit pinning down. The following are "okay" words for 1953: Bultmann, Lund, Tillich's first volume (one word), *Scottish Journal of Theology* (four words), nonbeing, Kierkegaardian (pronounced "Kierkegorian").

"Non-okay" Words. These are to be mentioned only in disparaging terms: neo-orthodoxy, natural theology, humanism, experience, Kierkegaardian (pronounced "Kierkegaardian").²

What to Do About Barth. The problem is two-dimensional. (1) You must know a great deal about Barth these days. (2) You don't. What to do, therefore, about Barth?

The following procedure has been tried, and is almost foolproof. Its three distinct stages can serve, cumulatively, to flatten almost any opponent.

Stage One. When Opponent is learnedly discoursing about Barth, wait until there is a pause or lull in the exposition, and then say in an off-hand manner, "Of course, you know he's moved way beyond that position in the latest volume of the *Dogmatik*."³ For the full strength of this gambit, it is essential that the last word be given a strong German flavor. If someone raises his eyebrows at your pronunciation, refer amusedly, in a mumbling sort of way, to "my incurable Bavarian accent."

The reference to the latest volume has the tactical value that it cannot be challenged by more than one out of 750 listeners, since the latest volume is always in German. It has the further advantage that it might also be true.⁴ The statement itself is often enough to deflate any self-styled "Barth expert."

Stage Two. If Opponent shows signs of rallying, rather than retreating, say quickly, after an almost imperceptible pause, and with the suggestion of a sigh, "How I wish they'd get the thing into English, once and for all." If Opponent is by now not completely silenced, say (**Stage Three**) to the most distinguished member of the group, "It would avoid so much misunderstanding of Barth's *real* position."

This series of statements will work against almost all theologians except those named T. F. Torrance.

The Appeal to Ignorance. The object here is to make Opponent feel that he has made either an utterly trivial theological distinction or that he is, in a rather gross way, trying to display intellectual superiority. Thus:

² Both lists will be revised from time to time. It will not be long, for example, certainly no more than six months, before "Buber" is an okay word.

³ It is sometimes effective to say this as an aside, in a loud voice, to someone other than the speaker.

⁴ As a general, though by no means universal, rule, truthfulness in Theological Gamesmanship heightens the ultimate effectiveness of any statement.

Opponent: But you must recall Anselm's distinction between . . .

Self (interrupting): I can honestly say that I have never read a single line in Anselm which had the remotest connection with the subject under discussion. (This is probably true.)

Opponent either has to shift gears (a victory for you), or go into such a minute explanation of Anselm that he will be hopelessly enmeshed in his own dialectic within thirty seconds.

Should he, foolish man, attempt to explain the Anselmic distinction to you, be hopelessly grateful to him, and pathetically eager to understand. Every time he stops for breath, break in just as he finishes, "Yes, yes, go on . . .", particularly if he stops for breath only about once every ten minutes.⁵ If this fails to confuse Opponent, produce a small notebook from your inside coat pocket,⁶ and *take notes* as he talks, being careful to question him on his own phraseology, and also asking for specific references to Anselm's untranslated works. Opponent will finally retire flustered and confused, with the uncomfortable feeling that you are a man of infinite pains with a really first-class mind.

The Appeal to History. Almost anyone can be put in his place by the suggestion that he is saying nothing new, or is, at best, only reaffirming some ancient heresy.

Opponent: Don't you think we're giving too little attention to spiritual things in theology these days?

Self: How curious of you to say that! You are the last person I would have suspected of being a Gnostic.⁷

Other gambits are easily adapted from this basic one. In any discussion of the ministry it is usually safe to comment, in a slightly tired voice, "Surely that was all thrashed out in the Donatist controversy." Or, "I thought Cyprian had said the last word on that."

When discussing the sacraments, one of two approaches (never both) is recommended. Either, "But man, that's sheer Zwinglianism!", or, "I take it, then, that you are defending magic, pure and simple."⁸

The Superior Knowledge Gambit (not for beginners). Easier to illustrate than explain.

⁵ "Okay" substitute phrases for "Yes, yes, go on . . ." are (a) "Just a moment now, I'm not sure I get that," and, (b) "Would you remind repeating that again more slowly?"

⁶ Theological Gamesmanship experts on the West Coast say that the vest pocket may be even more effective. Thanks here to A. Miller.

⁷ In some circles it will be more effective to say "Manichean," or, in extreme instances, when there is plenty of time, "a type of early second-century Docetist."

⁸ Oversimplifying his position in this manner, is the best way to anger, and therefore fluster, Opponent. Say (genially, if possible), "Well, reduced to its bare essentials, what you are *really* saying is . . ."

Opponent: I think my interpretation of the church has full historical precedent in Augustine.

Self (starting hesitantly, but gradually gaining assurance until the final words are spoken with complete authority, in an *ex cathedra* tone of voice): But surely, much as I admire your exposition, really now, which interpretation of Augustine's do you mean? There are at least five (eyes to ceiling for a brief moment of counting), yes five . . . (pause, then confidently) *There are at least five interpretations of the church in Augustine's extant writings.* (Give ever so slightly more emphasis to the word "extant.")

It is of utmost importance that the italicized words be spoken with authority, or Opponent may be brash enough to counter, "What are they?" *Voice control* is the key to success with any of these techniques. Statements must always be made in such a way that to question them could only lead onlookers to infer of your opponent, "What an utter dolt. Doesn't he know?" Never refer to "the Barmen declaration," for example, in such a way that a logical rejoinder could be "What's that?" The effect desired can be achieved either by speaking (a) passionately, or, sometimes, (b) off-handedly, so that the impression is conveyed that "we both know what I am talking about."

Suppose, however, Opponent does challenge the Superior Knowledge Gambit. Only one thing to do: bluff it out as good-humoredly as possible:

Self: Oh well (shrug of shoulders), I don't want to bore you with a thirty-minute lecture (chuckle) on Augustine. Show us those pictures of your children (playful dig in ribs).⁹

The most foolproof use of the Superior Knowledge Gambit is actually to possess some superior knowledge, and guide the conversation to the point where you can bring it in. See following section.

The "But Luther Said . . ." Retort. An invincible part of the armory of anyone who wants to discuss the Reformation. It consists of memorizing a few brief statements from a relatively inaccessible source such as the *Table Talk*.¹⁰ Whenever a statement is made about the Reformation, or Luther, or the late medieval period, insert into the discussion the appropriate quo-

⁹ This should be practiced several times before a mirror. It must convey the impression that you spent last summer visiting French abbeys collating the various Augustinian manuscripts and checking for errors in translation, but that you are really a family man at heart with a keen sense of what is ultimately important to your Opponent.

¹⁰ In dire emergencies it is considered *de rigueur* to quote from Roland Bainton's *most recent* book about Luther. Lists are now being compiled for aid in this instance, but it is admittedly hard to keep up to date.

tation from the *Table Talk*, prefixing it with the words, "But Luther said . . .", and emphasizing the word in this prefix which is most appropriate under the given conditions. If page number can be quoted, so much the better. It is not, however, yet considered in good taste to quote the passage in German before translating it condescendingly.¹¹

The Offhand Use of Foreign Words. A few of these are essential.

1. *Schöpfungsordnung.* Essential in the field of ethics. Can be referred to either (a) with approval, or (b) disparagingly.
2. *Humani generis.* Convenient when referring to a papal encyclical. Thus: "As the Pope put it in . . . was it *Humani generis?* . . ."
3. *ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος.* To be muttered under the breath, yet audibly, whenever someone refers to the Fourth Gospel.
4. It is sometimes effective to refer to "Jean Cauvin, or, as we have come to call him, Calvin . . ."
5. *Agape.* This is almost an "okay" word. It must *always* be used, as the English word "love" is inappropriate to theological discussion. Stress the second syllable. It is always stylish to refer to "the biblical notion of *agape*," and even more stylish to refer to "the *distinctively* biblical notion of *agape*."

(Note: This sentence, properly inflected (and it needs careful practice), is capable of starting the following chain of reasoning in the mind of Opponent: "This man is no fool. He knows his Greek. He has obviously read Nygren, he has mastered Kittel, and he is probably even acquainted with the criticisms of Father D'Arcy." It is even possible to pronounce *agape* in such a way that Opponent will instinctively be aware that you would pronounce its opposite "air-ose" instead of (vulgarily) "air-oss." To realize that such thoughts are going through the brain of Opponent is a not unpleasant experience and worth considerable pains.)

6. ". . . you mean you haven't studied Ugaritic?"

Palsy-walsy With the Great. Three lines of approach here.

1. On-the-"in"-with-the-World-Council.

Self: "t'Hooft said to me just last week, before he left for Geneva . . ." (No need to point out that he said it to 450 other listeners as well in a public auditorium in Columbus, Ohio.)

Or,

Self: "Well, I've decided to pass up Evanston. I rather fear I'll

¹¹ Note to Presbyterians: The "But Luther Said . . ." retort can be effectively adapted, with a minimum of trouble, to a discussion among Reformed theologians. The procedure is simple:

1. For "Luther" substitute "Calvin."
2. For *Table Talk* substitute *Sermons on Job*.
3. Proceed as above.

be knee-deep in galley proof by then . . ." (followed by a mumbled and deprecatory reference to ". . . publisher's very insistent . . .," said in such a way as to indicate that you are far too modest to wish to discuss your forthcoming book. This creates the impression that you have been *invited* to Evanston, probably by someone in Geneva who has written you addressing you by your first name.)

2. The I've-known-him-for-years-Impression: "Reinie" (no longer very impressive within 300 miles of Union Seminary); "Jim" (as in *Democracy and the Churches*); "Pit" (very effective on the continent); "John" (supply by inference Baillie, Bennett, or Mackay); "Liston;" "Nels;" "Cush" (substantial evidence of being On the Inside Track at Chicago).¹²
3. If by any chance you have seen a pre-publication copy of a new book in the field of theology, remark casually, "I was looking the thing over before Scribners put it on the market, and honestly, I hadn't a thing to suggest." (You are not obligated, in this gambit, to add that nobody, Scribners particularly, asked you to suggest anything.)

The Book Review Shortcut. There are three basic ways of making use of book reviews:

1. Read *only* the reviews, never the books: "When I saw how Pauck went after him, I knew he wouldn't be worth my time."
2. Read *all* the reviews: "Strange, isn't it, that two men so far apart as Wieman and Brunner should both like Feemer's new *Symbolics*. It makes you wonder . . ." (voice gradually trailing off).
3. Be *stimulated* by reviews: "I'm devoting the entire month of January to finding out whether this new thing on von Hügel is really all that good."¹³

Impressing Oneself on the Group as a Person With a Definite Position. Discover the theological position of the group which you wish to crash, and then employ *one* of the two following opening conversational gambits, depending on whether you wish to evoke the response, "Ahh, this fellow is

¹² Two cautions necessary here: (a) Only theologians who have small boys wearing holsters are likely to appreciate references to the noted Pascal scholar as "Yippee-sie-O" Cailliet. (b) Only Boston people seem to know just how to deal with the imposing array of names subsumed by "J.A.C.F. Auer." Boston, so far, has remained conspicuously silent.

¹³ Be sure that the month named is at least four months in the future, to convey the feeling that, desperate as you are to confirm your impression, every minute is absolutely blocked out until then.

really one of us!" or, alternately, "What a courageous chap to say a thing like that *here!*"

1. "After all, though, it's not theology that's so important, I always say. It's living that really counts."
2. "There is not a single question worth asking which is not rooted in the necessity of affirming man's utter impotence."

Equipped with these weapons in his theological arsenal, the Theological Gamesman can "sally forth to the fray" (as has been said by others), confident of undermining his Opponent and thus making real and fine and true the great statement by (was it Melanchthon?) that "there is no substitute for Victory."

The Ethos of Islam: Comparison and Comment

EDWIN E. CALVERLEY

WHEN A CHRISTIAN says to a Muslim friend, "I should like you to become a Christian. Have you ever thought of giving up Islam?" most frequently he receives the reply, "No, never." If the question is put in this way, "Is there anything that would persuade you to accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?" the Muslim probably answers, "No, nothing at all. As a Muslim I revere Jesus Christ, but I believe that what Muhammad taught about God was true. The Qur'ān which God gave to him for us teaches just what Jesus had taught about God; but before Muhammad came, the Christians distorted the real *Injīl*, the Gospel. Therefore we Muslims disbelieve the present Christian religion."

Nevertheless, throughout the Eastern World numerous individuals and groups of thousands who were formerly Muslims have become Christians. But it is also true that during the centuries since Islam started innumerable Christians and peoples of other faiths have become Muslims. To this day persons in many lands East and West publicly renounce Christianity, take Muslim names, and publish in magazines and books statements about their change of religious allegiance. It should be noted that this brings upon them no civil or political disabilities. In one Muslim land, "converts" by the hundreds and occasionally by the thousands have registered themselves as Muslims.

Why has Islam had so strong a hold on its millions of adherents and also impelled others to enroll as Muslims? Is there something in the ethos or distinctive characteristics of this system of life that explains this allegiance to Islam?

I

A brief review of the rôle of religion in the East should be helpful. It was through religion that ancient societies were controlled. Sometimes divine kings ruled peoples. In some lands religious leaders or priests im-

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posed divine laws upon their communities. Even in this century political leaders, using mundane substitutes for religion, demand complete subservience of their followers. Communist rulers deny divine or other-world sanctions and make communism a pseudo- or irreligious religion. They use external compulsions to make and keep people Communist. From their dictates they permit no deviation; in a religion the word "heresy" would be used.

The Old Testament also provides clear examples of external compulsion in association with religion. To the Hebrews religion meant the Law, with its sanctions and rewards. The Law said, "Thou shalt; thou shalt not." The religious life involved obedience: "Do this and thou shalt live." Even the highest and best was by command: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God. . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor. . . ." It was the prophet Hosea who stated the number of things in the Law of God as ten thousand (Hos. 8:12). For orthodox Jews the number did not cease to grow. To many, Judaism still means strict obedience to the letter of the Law. In the new state of Israel efforts are being made to give political as well as social sanctions to the ancient ordinances.

It was Jesus Christ who changed the common *authoritarian* character of religion from that of compulsory observance of legalistic prescriptions to the spiritual principle of voluntary heartfelt love of God expressing itself in good will toward all men.

Jesus taught that the worship of God should be spiritual and result in selfless service to the needy. To him real religion was not expressed through compulsion or fear, nor was pure religion promoted by social pressures and inducements. The Law said, Fear God and keep his commandments. Jesus said, If you love me you will keep my commandments because you and I are friends. Jesus did not contravene the teaching of the Old Testament. He did not convert any of his followers to the worship of a God different from the God of Abraham, Moses, and the Prophets. Rather he revealed the true meaning of the Hebrew Scriptures and taught that God and his religion are spiritual in essence. The worship and service of God require a spiritual rebirth. This rebirth is not earned by worth or bought by works. But it is available to any who desire and accept it. It accompanies repentance from sin and faith in Christ as Savior. These are the distinctive characteristics of the religion that Jesus Christ taught and they comprise the Christian ethos.

In a few centuries, despite pagan opposition, Christianity spread among the peoples of Western Asia and other lands. But all too soon groups of

Christians reverted to communal rather than personal and spiritual attitudes toward their religion. The preachers of the various Christian communities ignored the supreme and unique teaching of their Lord. They abandoned personal repentance, sincere worship by the individual, and good will toward others. They stopped teaching the need for the "second birth" and were satisfied to be just like other people in their *social* life. They followed the inherited attitudes of their communities. Then Christians of different races forgot that they were brethren in religion and adhered to their racial attitudes. Christians of different regions adopted different creeds, not on the basis of Scripture and spiritual understanding, but in accordance with secular motives. The Christian social systems became also *political*. The result was that one type of Christian doctrine and practice became the official religion of the Eastern Roman Empire in 380. Ecclesiastical officials of that sect and officers of the state began to use the civil and military power of the government to force the official religion upon other Christians and even upon non-Christians.

All this was a degradation of the religion of Jesus Christ. There was no spiritual unity in Christendom. There was no single Christology, no sense of Christian brotherhood, no common Christian faith. The orthodox were those who belonged to the imperial sect. The orthodox and some of the dissident groups, and one of them in particular, had missionary zeal and carried their Christian convictions as far eastward as China and southward into Arabia. But that type of Christianity was later eclipsed, although not entirely wiped out, by Islam. Professor L. E. Browne, at the end of his description of this failure, says: "The people who called themselves Christians had accepted the false idea of the supremacy of worldly might—an idea clearly akin to what in our own day we call secularism—in other words, the denial of the supremacy of the spirit."¹ The present-day hatreds and antagonisms of the various communities in the Near and Middle East are the heritage of that early abandonment of the spiritual nature of Christ's religious teaching.

II

It is not wrong to say that Islam itself, born in the seventh century, is one tremendous result of the corruption brought upon the pure and original teaching of Jesus. Indeed, many scholars, Catholic, Protestant, and nontheological anthropologist, have considered Islam to be a Christian heresy. Islam, like Christianity, started as a purely religious movement with a spiritual teaching about God which was to find expression in social

¹ Browne, L. E., *The Eclipse of Christianity in Asia*. The Macmillan Company, 1933, p. 184.

welfare. Muhammad's message in Mecca in 610 was: Worship Allah alone and do good to orphans and widows. That message, together with the fear of the Judgment Day that he inculcated, in a dozen years brought him a few hundred followers. Then, in 622, Muhammad emigrated to al-Madinah and changed his religious brotherhood into a theocratic social and political community with himself as Allah's vicegerent. In Mecca he had used persuasion only; he preached and taught to win converts. But in al-Madinah he enacted laws, murdered recalcitrant Jews, confiscated their property, led his Muslims against the Meccans and sent armies into neighboring areas. All this was done with earnest conviction on the part of Muhammad and his followers that they were promoting obedience to Allah among men.

Thus far this presentation has endeavored to show our readers that Islam, like Judaism and Oriental (but not New Testament) Christianity, is an *authoritarian social and political system* that claims divine origin and sanction.

There are two further features of Islam that should be noted. Muhammad's successors were the heirs of his political and civil power, but not heirs of his prophetic and legislative prerogatives. Under these successors Islam became an expanding religious empire whose leaders produced an ever-increasing number of laws and regulations. The law of Islam, like the Jewish Law, covers every activity, both public and private, of the Muslim. His public actions are governed by external civil and political powers and sanctions, administered by officials. His personal and private life is guided by his religious leaders of the past and present. Thus Orthodox Islam, like original Judaism, is "totalitarian," in the sense that it includes under its authority all departments and aspects of existence. It is total in that no detail or item of a Muslim's life, from the cradle to the grave, is excluded from direction and regulation.

This characteristic of Islam is well known to Muslims and other students of Islam. In the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, the article on "Ethics and Morality (Muslim)," by Dr. T. J. De Boer, says, "To the true Muslim, as to the devout Jew, religion means a law which should control and regulate the whole life of man. From the Oriental point of view, not only social, but also political life, is bound up in the closest way with religion." Dr. Zaki Ali, an Egyptian Muslim, in his book, *Islam in the World*,² says, ". . . in the Islamic society religion pervades and permeates every individual action, both in the spiritual and in the material domain. In other words both religion and politics exist in Islam in a perfect sym-

² Lahore, 1938, pp. 56f.

biosis." There is another discussion of this subject in "Islam, an Interpretation," in *The Moslem World*,⁸ by the present writer.

Still another characteristic of Islam is that, like Buddhism and Christianity, it is a *missionary* religion. There are differences of opinion among non-Muslim students of Islam (but not among Muslim scholars) as to whether Muhammad himself considered his mission to be universal. The evidence of tradition is that he did. The logic of Muhammad's teaching about Allah favors the view that Islam should expand, and history certainly confirms that conclusion. Allah, so Muhammad had taught, is the only true God, the one Creator and Lord of all that exists. His providence embraces all. But only some of mankind acknowledge him and obey his laws. Those who do not are ungrateful unbelievers and are rebellious against their rightful Ruler. Obedient believers, therefore, are but serving Allah when they compel Allah's enemies to submit and render the worship that belongs to him alone. If success seems certain, unbelieving peoples may be subdued by war (*jihād*), or they may be converted by any other suitable means. Jews and Christians, being "people of the Book," are under no legal compulsion to become Muslims, but are welcome to do so. Thus, Islam is *missionary* in principle, and has, in no small measure, endeavored to be so historically.

These, then, are the five qualities that characterize Islam, namely, that it is a system of life that is an authoritarian, social, political, totalitarian, and missionary religion. These characteristics explain how and why Islam has attracted and held the allegiance of individuals and communities. In some areas Islam has unquestionably provided pagans and idolaters with better religious beliefs and cultural patterns than they had before. But from Christian communities it is seldom that Islam gains converts through other than political, social, and economic inducements. Under strict Islamic law the non-Muslim is a sub-citizen with civil disabilities, while the Muslims receive social and political advantages that others may not share. In practice, however, the discrimination is much less in Pakistan and Islamic India.

III

The *essence* of Islam is expressed in the two sentences of the Qur'ān which were brought together to form its Short Creed. The Arabic words are: *Lā ilāha illa 'llāh wa Muḥammadur-rasūlu 'llāh*, "There is no god at all but Allah, and Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah." In Islamic law, the mere utterance of these words makes any individual a Muslim. Thereby

⁸ Vol. xxviii (1938), pp. 6-21.

his person and his property become legally inviolate to other Muslims. There are no racial or other restrictions upon the profession of Islam. No payments are required and there is no necessary initiatory rite. Even circumcision, although customary, is not universal among Muslims, nor is it imperative, for it is not mentioned in the Qur'ān. Thus it is exceedingly easy for a person to become a Muslim.

Moreover, Islam has never had a single system of doctrine and practice to which all Muslims had to adhere. There has never been only one kind of Islam, nor has Islam ever been static and unchangeable. Even during the score of years when Muhammad was proclaiming the Qur'ān, changes were being made by Allah himself, the Author of the Book, as all Muslims believe. That process is called "abrogation," and was stated and explained in Sūrah II:100: "Whatever verse We (Allah) abrogate or cause to be forgotten, one better or like it We bring." Changes in belief and practice have continued during the history of Islam. The variations in doctrine have produced schisms and sects innumerable. During fourteen centuries, only twice have Muslims been subjected to theological inquisitions under state auspices, and only a few heretics have been put to death for their doctrinal statements. Islam has been tolerant of nonconformity in belief after utterance of the creed.

Similarly, Islam has never known uniformity in laws and customs. As in theological matters, so also the political, social, racial, and communal parties are innumerable. Several dissident groups are almost as old as Islam itself. Others have been in existence only a generation or two. Of these sects, the oldest and largest, which, indeed, calls itself the Sect, *Shī'ah*, of 'Alī, claims to be "the Only True Islam," although it numbers only about a tenth of the orthodox, Sunnī, Muslims. The Sunnīs, being the majority, naturally claim to be the community of Muhammad.

The significant fact is that all these parties, whether doctrinal or political in origin, consider themselves to be real Muslims, and are in general tolerant of all others who declare themselves to be Muslims. Indeed, the Muslims of the strictest group, who are such zealous fundamentalists that they have been called "Muslims double," admit to the sacred city of Mecca any adherents of any other group, because all who recite the Muslim creed are in duty bound to perform the Pilgrimage, if possible.

Thus the tolerance of Islam embraces many varieties of Muslims. But it is another story when any Muslim of any Muslim state or community wishes to abandon Islam and join any non-Muslim organization or society.

Then pressure is brought to bear upon him. He is legally subject to the loss of his civil and political status, separation from his Muslim family and disinheritance, and in some cases he may be imprisoned or even put to death. As a result of the religion-government relationship in Islam, apostasy in religion is tantamount to political treachery. Islam grants full freedom to anyone to become or remain a Muslim. There is no legal procedure in any Muslim state by which a Muslim may change his religious allegiance. "Once a Muslim always a Muslim" is the Islamic law.

The facts just mentioned form a large part of the explanation of the fewness of converts from Islam.

It is the Muslims themselves that have developed the limitation of their religious liberty, along with the rest of their system of life, and of course it will be the Muslims who produce any change they desire. Change, by the principle of *ijmā'*, "Agreement," is possible in Islam. There is a verse in the Qur'ān which says, "There is no compulsion at all in religion" (II:257). Perhaps full religious liberty will come for Muslims when a sufficient number of them accept the verse as still or again valid. There is a minority that now accepts its validity.

Muslims living under non-Muslim laws in non-Muslim lands normally enjoy full liberty of conscience in religion. This they readily understand, because Muslim states have always granted such freedom to "the People of the Book," that is, communities whose sacred Scriptures are monotheistic. In New York City there is a group of about two thousand Tatar Muslims who came to America from Poland during this century, simply because here religious liberty is guaranteed. Here also it is possible for persons born in Muslim families to belong to Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches—to mention only cases known to the present writer. (Incidentally, the Muslim communities in lands where freedom of religion exists are the most fertile fields for missionary endeavor.) But even here a certain measure of intolerance remains; for when the remark was made to the young lady who had joined the Presbyterian church, "You know you will be killed if you do not marry one of your own Muslim community," she replied, quite nonchalantly, "Oh, I've been hearing that since I was twelve or thirteen years old."

In view of the many varieties of belief and practice within Islam and its special kinds of toleration for other monotheists, it becomes quite clear that the indispensable substance, the essential content of Islam as a religion is belief in Allah alone as God and in Muhammad as his Apostle. Thus Islam's ethos and nature may be expressed in a single sentence as a divinely

authoritarian social, political, and religious system demanding acknowledgment of Allah as God and Muhammad as his Apostle, "totalitarian" in its aim to regulate the life of all mankind.

IV

Muslim doctrine includes six articles of faith: Belief in Allah, Scriptures, Angels, Prophets, the Last Day, and the Decree of Good and Evil. Islamic practices include five activities: the Recital of the Creed, the Performance of the Worship, Fasting during Ramadan, the Payment of the Tax, and the Pilgrimage. Islam also requires *ihsān*, Beneficence.

Books describing Islam are readily available. Here two suggestions are made for Christians wishing to discuss religious subjects with Muslims. The first is to have an adequate knowledge of Christian theology, with the ability to present that knowledge systematically. The second is to secure just as thorough a knowledge of Islam. There are misunderstandings on both sides that need to be cleared away. For instance, the Muslim usually does not know what the Bible teaches about God the Father and understands the phrase "the Son of God" in the first verse of the Gospel of Mark to have the human physical implications of the word "son," rather than as the expression of a divine eternal, internal relationship that in time became also external and human in Jesus, without impairing the oneness of the eternal relationship. Jesus said, "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30). A good general procedure is that when phrases subject to misunderstanding are first used they should be accompanied by suitable explanations.

Sometimes, in theological discussions with Muslims, to avoid giving offense or misleading information, it is advisable to know Muslim Arabic. The Arabic language furnishes the technical theological vocabulary for Muslims in all countries, whatever their local speech may be. For instance, in articles or books in English intended for Muslims, the expression "the nature of Allah" should always be avoided, because the Muslims would translate the phrase, mentally or orally, into its Arabic equivalent. The Arabic translation of that expression would be *tabi'at allāh*. But all Muslims everywhere believe that the word *tabi'at*, "nature," implies creation. The natures of all things are created. Allah impresses upon every thing its nature. Nothing gives to him his "nature." What is really meant by the English phrase is not understood by Muslims until the word is explained in its special sense. Expressions that could be used with understanding by both parties and without offense to either could be "the Muslim doctrine of Allah," or "the being, *dhāt*, of Allah."

Just as important as the avoidance of offense through adequate and accurate knowledge is the attitude of frankness and fairness. Loyal Muslims want their Christian friends to become Muslims, just as the earnest Christian desires his Muslim friend to find the new life that faith in Christ secures. It is therefore well to emphasize the complete freedom and personal responsibility involved in Christianity. The Christian may say, "Yes, just as much as you want me to believe as you do, so I want you to accept Christ as Savior. But I want you to become a Christian only if and when you yourself believe in him as Savior. I do not want you to change your religion until and unless you yourself believe that you should."

Of course, it would be easier for the Muslim to change his religious allegiance if the laws of his country and the customs of his community gave him religious freedom. It is splendid that the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights includes "freedom of thought, conscience and religion" in that superb document. But even if a Muslim's own government should accept that Declaration, it would still be extremely difficult for an earnest person to abandon all that Islam has come to mean for him. And to reach women in Muslim lands the most practical procedure in the teaching of the Christian way of life appears to be the establishment of orphanages and hostels.

Full religious freedom involves the voluntary adoption of one's religion from personal conviction, without governmental inducement or any social or economic advantage. It would just as readily permit any person to accept any other religion without losing any national, civil, or social status. Governments should preserve the rights of individuals in their purely religious concerns.

There are still some countries in the West where particular religious organizations receive special privileges because of special relationships to the governments of those nations. In the measure of the closeness of their affiliations the spiritual quality of the religion so related is injured. The deterioration is the greater because the beneficiaries of the privileges consider that the advantages they receive increase their prestige and influence for God, forgetting that all the spiritual power that is acceptable to God comes from goodness and truth, rather than from pomp and circumstance.

V

Perhaps during "the time of ignorance," a term known to both the New Testament and the Qur'an, or the childhood of the race, the limitations of ceremonial and other unspiritual activity may be overlooked. But

surely the day of grace and truth has now come. God wants sincere, spiritual, and voluntary worship and service, from each individual, with compulsion only from within, with no motive but love, manifesting itself in unselfish good will always, everywhere and to all.

This is not new opinion or doctrine. Even when Christianity was being betrayed, albeit unwittingly, by those who neglected Christ's emphasis upon the spiritual nature of his religion, there were some who accepted the personal, although not the social, aspects of his teaching. These were the ascetics and hermits who withdrew from the secular life of their communities. They, rather than the priests and other church officials, became the saints of Christianity. New Testament Christianity never disappeared completely from the Near East and Medieval Europe.

Then, in the sixteenth century, a monk received a fresh insight into the original teaching of his Lord. He learned that real religion is spiritual in its essence, that faith should rule in man's mind and that unselfishness should mark his conduct with others. Martin Luther took his stand for freedom of conscience. He gave New Testament Christianity to a spiritually starved Christendom. Protestantism gave back to the church members their direct relationship to God. The spread of the Reformation movement from country to country without wars of aggression and the still growing strength of Bible-based Christianity are evidences of the innate appeal that New Testament religion has for mankind.

To all people Christ still offers his religion. He provides freedom both to be and to do good. The natural man, one who disregards the spiritual part of his nature, lives under compulsions of many kinds—the compulsions of his lower nature and of society. But man also has ideals. He finds it hard to practice the virtues he admires. In response to simple faith Christ provides what man needs and at his best really wants. Christ frees from the guilt and power of sin.

Even the man who does not cultivate his spiritual qualities finds his deepest satisfaction when he does what is good and right. Through direct relationship with Christ such a man can find lasting happiness. In thankfulness he faces life's experiences in freedom from care, in increasing freedom from former failures and future fears. His life has become spiritual, for his hopes are in the spiritual world, whatever his social experiences may be. He is not unduly concerned that all his fellows should think well of him. The validity of his religion reveals itself in his attitude of good will toward all and in his selfless service to those in need.

These are the aspects of the gospel of Christ that require permanent emphasis among all men and that will have their own appeal to Muslims.

There is still another feature of Christ's religion that also needs emphasis on all mission fields in these days of rising nationalisms. Christianity has no essential association with any nationalism. Without wronging, but rather helping, any nation, Christianity promotes the wellbeing and brotherhood of all mankind. Anyone who becomes a Christian does not thereby lose his racial, national, social, worthy vocational or other worthy worldly status. The Egyptian remains an Egyptian; the Indian is still an Indian, although no longer a Hindu or Muslim; the carpenter is still a carpenter, and the farmer may remain a farmer. But the evildoer becomes a doer of good and finds happiness therein. A Christian African should and could be a noble African, respected and honored by all whose opinion has worth. And Egyptian Christians should be the foremost in all good works, bringing only distinction to their nation.

But, alas, it is all too true that Christians live in a world where many, if not the majority, are evil and do evil, and where evil often dominates. Assessing the evil in the world and assigning the blame for it are futile and fruitless activities. Like other people, the Christian is responsible only for his own attitudes and activities, whether they involve himself alone or affect others as well. The more devoted and active a Christian is in being and doing good, the greater will be the quantity of goodness, beneficence, and welfare in the world.

These are some of the realities, ideas, and hopes that Christians wish to share with others everywhere. Any Muslim or other person who desires full freedom for the kind of religious life that he admires can find it in the Christian way of life.

The Bible and Civilization

Ad Clerum

FREDERICK C. GRANT

IT IS SOMETIMES SAID that the Bible is "the least read best-seller." How those who pass on this quip could provide the evidence to support it, is hard to see! Perhaps some radio poll or questionnaire would supply evidence; perhaps an inference from the results in everyday American life, or the absence of results, would furnish some proof. But both these tests would be questionable, and moreover neither of them has been made. Some of our literary leaders are unenthusiastic about the Old Testament, Messrs. A. A. Milne and Somerset Maugham in particular; but at least the book has to be read to be criticized, or for anyone to understand the criticism! One is still entitled to the opinion, surely, that the millions of people who each year buy, receive as a gift, or give away copies of the Bible do not spend their money—or let others spend it—for nothing, but actually read this good ancient book.

I am not now concerned with the subject of the Bible as the book of life not only for the church but also for our whole civilization—the key to its highest goals and aims, its noblest standards of right and justice, even when these are more honored in the breach than in the observance. That is a subject I dealt with very briefly in an article, "The Gospels and Civilization" (*RELIGION IN LIFE*, Vol. XII, pp. 231-237). What I am concerned with now is the question whether the Bible is actually read, and how the clergy can encourage its reading, point out its importance, and guide the readers to its clear understanding. The new *Revised Standard Version* is of course in everyone's mind these days—it is literally one of the "best sellers," according to the Book Review sections of the daily papers. We are also thinking of the *Interpreter's Bible*, one of the greatest projects in biblical interpretation in all history. But we are really concerned with the "grass roots" level. Do people actually read the Bible? Do they understand it? And why is it important that they should do so?

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We live at a time which may some day be described as the Twentieth-Century Renaissance of interest in the Bible. There were never so many new translations—one a year, I am told, since 1900. There were never so many commentaries and other helps to the understanding of the Bible as are available today. There was never so much broadcasting of the Bible, or so much reference to it in journals and the popular press. There were never so many copies printed: in the first eight weeks after publication, 1,600,000 copies of the new *Revised Standard Version* of the whole Bible were sold. Even in 1947, the millionth copy of the R.S.V. New Testament, then a year old, was presented to Martin Niemöller when he visited the United States.

Not only the Protestant churches and the Anglican but the Roman Catholic Church, and also the Jewish Synagogue, are engaged in renewed biblical study and publication. And not only in the United States, but in other countries as well—the Dutch prepared and printed a new revised version under the very nose of the German Gestapo, during the recent war. The already famous Zürcherbibel of the Reformed Swiss Church is a new version. The British churches are even now engaged upon a revision of the English Revised Version. Dr. Eric North's account of the Bible Society translations, *The Book of a Thousand Tongues*, published in 1939, would now have to be called the Book of a thousand and fifty tongues! It is really a long time since such a wave of popular enthusiasm for the Bible could be observed.

But there are some who do not share it, some for whom the Bible is a kind of "chained book," or at least a closed book; who do not realize how enormously important the Bible is for the life, thought, devotion, and teaching of the church, even though it is the church which has preserved and used it through the long centuries, and which cherishes it still as one of its most priceless possessions. The fact that a few fundamentalists misinterpret the Bible, and take it in bare literal earnest, without imagination or spiritual insight, should not lead others to neglect it—though this is a natural reaction against such barren bibliolatry. Nor should the gifted person who possesses a special skill in poetic understanding, or who has had a particularly rich spiritual experience, cut himself off from the study of the Bible, as if his own gifts or experiences were enough, without recourse to the religious tradition of the ages. Nor should anyone deprive himself of this rich heritage of spiritual illumination and intellectual refreshment because he finds it in essence in the Catechism or in the Liturgy: that would be like foregoing the classics and limiting oneself to some precious, well-

chosen, but very brief anthology—or possibly an abridged edition made for beginners.

To say the very least, no one can really understand the world we live in, or the religion we profess, if he ignores the Bible. Down the broad middle path of the world's great literature comes the Bible. All the modern literatures of mankind are related to it, depend upon it, have been nourished and inspired by it, or at the very least reflect its influence. It is a book, or collection of books, that originated in the East; but it has influenced the West far more than any other collection of writings. It is written in Hebrew, with a few chapters in Aramaic, and in Greek; it has always had to be translated, in the Christian Church, i.e., in the West. It is not a "literary" creation, but is purely religious—though a few of its sixty-six books (eighty, with the Apocrypha) are in excellent prose or poetry, and rank among the world's "great" literary works: Job and the Psalms and Ruth, for example, in the Old Testament; Judith and Wisdom and Tobit, in the Apocrypha; Luke and Acts and the Epistle to the Hebrews, in the New Testament. It was written during a long period—a thousand years for the Old Testament; three centuries for the Apocrypha; a century for the New Testament.

Its main, central subject throughout is religion. As Greece set the standard for art, in the ancient world; as Rome, for law; so Judaism and Christianity set the standard for religion; each was the result of a long process of divinely inspired creativity. There is no use in asking why? or how? You cannot answer the question: it just is so. Once the standard is set, it remains set for all time; and it matters little where it was first set, or when. The use of the wheel; the invention of geometry and algebra; the discovery of the ratio between circumference and diameter in a circle, or between the hypotenuse and two sides of a right-angled triangle—once these are established they stay established. No one can question them. They are like the pictures in the Vatican Gallery: as an old guide once told a complaining tourist, "Madam, these pictures are not on trial!"

Our Western civilization and culture (I do not underscore the obvious and say our religion) are not to be explained or understood apart from the Bible. The priceless treasures of Western art—take away the Bible and who would guess the meaning of half the paintings or the sculptures, yes, or even the architecture of the old Christian communities in Europe, or their copies (and some originals) here in the New World? Take only two illustrations from Christian sculpture: Michelangelo's David, and his Moses. Suppose the Western world were once more overwhelmed by barbarians,

or that the earth were invaded by travelers from outer space, who had never heard of the Bible. They might possibly admire the superb anatomy of both these figures, as experts have admired it for centuries. But the real meaning of the two sculptures—how could they ever guess that?

Young David, confident of his God-given skill and strength, confronts the Philistine giant (whom of course we do not see); he is bold, very bold, but not too bold; he does not underrate the odds against him, nor overrate himself; there is a look of fierce courage in his eyes, and a tension that runs through every muscle in his body. Michelangelo has caught that very instant when the young shepherd takes the pebble from his wallet and fits it in his sling—and he has made that heroic instant immortal.

Or who could possibly guess the meaning of his Moses, apart from the biblical story that inspired it? Anatomy? Perfect, of course—consider who did it! But the intellectual and spiritual meaning is much more important. Moses has just come down from his forty days amid the thunders and lightnings of Mt. Sinai, with the freshly inscribed divine law in his hands. As he looks across toward his people, the Israelites, encamped in the plain below, he discovers that they are worshiping—not the Lord their God, but a golden calf! What could be more disillusioning to a religious leader, the liberator of his people! After all the long months of struggle and hardship, of heroic battle with the desert, with thirst and famine, with the Egyptians, and with the wild tribes that opposed them—after all the divine mercies shown in miracle and portent and succor, at the last crucial moment, *idolatry!* Idolatry paid to a golden calf, the work of their own hands! The revulsion, the dismay, the sorrow, the anger, the disappointment, the grief—all these surging emotions storm through the fiery mind of the great Hebrew liberator, and are caught and held forever by the sculptor's chisel. Give up the Bible, or forget it, or (what is less improbable) cease to read it, and a race of ignorant worldlings will some day gaze vacantly at the most priceless artistic treasures the Western world possesses; and they may, after a time, like the earlier barbarians who stared blankly at the classical sculptures, break them up and turn them into lime!

But if the Bible is to be appreciated it must of course be understood. And if it is to be understood it must be interpreted—as any classic must be interpreted, at least for beginners. Some day they will be able to read for themselves and understand; but then they will themselves begin to be interpreters. For four hundred years now, the Reformation principle, i.e., the literal, historical interpretation of the Bible as against the allegorical or other methods, has striven for recognition. But it has not yet won full

recognition. For the dogmatic presupposition still prevails in many quarters and dictates the interpretation, even to the meaning of Greek or Hebrew words and the historical explanation of the development of ancient Jewish or primitive Christian religious thought. It tries to slip strait jackets on biblical scholars, who must accordingly be always on their guard; and this is a bad atmosphere in which to work. Contrast the freedom accorded classical scholars! I realize that the subject matter in hand is different, and that religious interests are very real; but I firmly believe in freedom, and in the greater value of the work of free scholarship than that of captive scholarship. I believe with Coleridge that if you treat the Bible as you would any other book, you will soon discover how different it is, and you will begin to find treasures in it not found anywhere else.

It is sometimes maintained even by theologians, i.e., by those whose interests do not include the critical study of the Bible, that, for systematic purposes or for practical, they "take the Bible just as it is," without inquiring into its origin, history, background, text, grammar, or exegesis—leaving all these matters to the experts, who do find them interesting, just as some persons are fascinated with crossword puzzles! And it has even been the boast of some that the Christian religion stands secure on its own basis of sacred tradition and the sacred institution, without appeal to the Bible or to history—an extreme position where rationalistic philosophy and rationalistic dogmatism meet and coincide. It is another version of Lessing's aphorism, "The truths of metaphysics are not established by the data of history." And it is also clear that this latter view arose out of the effort to escape pure biblicism, or in reaction against it. "The Bible and the Bible only" proved an inadequate basis for systematic doctrine; it made no allowance for development, or for the reformulation or restatement of divine truth; and it kept Christianity too scantily clad in what Carlyle called the ragged clothes of a collection of ancient writings.

But the truth of the matter is that if one is to "take the Bible just as it is" he must take it as an ancient collection of traditions and of traditional books, the ancient sacred literature of the Jews, to which was added the surviving literature of the early Christian movement—that part, at least, which could be claimed as apostolic—and that from any modern point of view it is inevitable that we must study it as we would any other collection of ancient sacred books. If the collection records a process of divine revelation, and of corresponding religious development—as it certainly does—then the most careful, most intelligent study of these writings ought to make even clearer what the revelation consisted in, and should bring the truth and

value of that revelation into the very foreground of our thinking. In other words, if we are to "take the Bible just as it stands," we must take it as modern men, and study it with the only equipment we possess, confident that the God of revelation has spoken to us in our language, in the terms of our thought, in response to our needs—and not just those of peoples long ago. Which things the angels, no doubt, desire to look into: but God has not addressed this revelation to them, but to us, as the author of Hebrews insisted.

Moreover the interpreter must make sure that his interpretation is understood by those to whom it is addressed. It is a common error of preachers to substitute theology, or even theological controversy or argumentation, for religious teaching and practice. Of course there will always be a place and a need for theology—if we doubted that we would not be ministers! Intelligent religious men must think: and thinking about religion produces theology. But too often the religion presupposed and taken for granted in theological discussion or argumentation—and even in the pulpit—is either not understood, not articulate, not fully experienced, or even, alas, is sometimes nonexistent. What possible meaning, for example, can an argument over the divine government of the world, or the divine control of human history, have for those who do not possess any idea of God? Those for whom, as we are told, he is only a "big oblong blur," for whom the sole evidence of his existence is what some call "fiffs" (funny internal feelings")?

Too much of our theology gets nowhere for the simple reason that the religion, i.e., the religious experience, which it presupposes, interprets, and relies upon is simply not there. It is like building upon soft clay or upon sand. Or worse, it is like the procedure of the Brobdingnagians in Swift's satire, who always built their houses from the ridge-pole down. Some theologians, alas, some interpreters of the Bible, alas, begin with a starry vacuity and work down to earth, or rather toward the earth—they sometimes never reach it. The layman, the wayfaring man, the ordinary man in the street has not the faintest idea what is going on, or even what the learned gentlemen of the cloth are talking about! Let us indeed "add to our virtue knowledge"—knowledge of theology, knowledge of history, knowledge of the Bible and of Christian doctrine: but do not let us forget to add knowledge of people, and of their religious life, of the religious experience that unites them and makes possible a further understanding of divine revelation. For if we fail here, and do not make contact with our hearers, our own store of wisdom and knowledge will go for nothing: no one will be able to understand us.

Instead of regretting it, let us congratulate ourselves upon being called to live in a day like this—one of terror and turmoil, in many ways, but also one of hope, and of renewed thirst for God and of eager study of his Word. If there is today a fresh renaissance of interest in the Bible, as I believe there is, it may lead to vast results in the future, even in the near future. What if the world should suddenly become aware of the fact of human brotherhood, taught by Holy Scripture (e.g., Acts 17:26); or of the futility as well as the sin of warfare (Matt. 26:52); of the fact that God rules this world (Ps. 47:7f) and that it belongs to him (Ps. 24:1f) and will be judged by him (Acts 17:31); that the “unattainable” ideals of righteousness and peace really *are* attainable, by his help (Luke 18:27, Mark 9:23, II Cor. 12:9)? I cite only a few basic principles of the teaching of the Bible which are also basic and indispensable if civilization is to survive, let alone go forward.

We Christians are committed people: we believe all this, and we are pledged to work for it. We are concerned not only to preserve the full values of the present civilization (for it certainly does possess real values, as contrasted with barbarism, though it still leaves much to be desired), but also to work for a new and better one, here in this world. Our concern is *not only* otherworldly and “beyond history” *but also* this-worldly and within history. And although the mere reading of the Bible will not bring this to pass, it is one of the most promising roads leading toward that better civilization. And so our task, as Christians, as teachers and interpreters of God’s truth enshrined in this sacred book, is a high and holy one, and also one that is full of promise; for today and also for tomorrow; for our own people and also for all the world.

Let the Translators Speak

JOHN L. CHEEK

I

THE PUBLICATION in September, 1952, of the Revised Standard Bible brought into clearer focus a pressing problem concerning the English version of Christian Scripture. That problem is whether the King James revision, a Bible which has been "authorized" by common use for nearly three and a half centuries and whose excellent qualities have been enhanced by long-hallowed associations, should yield place to a version with the old errors of text and translation corrected, and using colloquial speech from everyday life. The unprecedented sales of the Revised Standard Version attest an enthusiastic response and use by a surprisingly large number of Christians and churches. For the many already converted to the values of modern translations, the only question is how best to share their convictions with others. Yet the Bible burnings in the pulpit, bitter pamphlet attacks, the newspaper controversies in countless communities, a state legislator who proposes a law to ban the new Bible, these and other negative responses show that for many Christians the new revision is an unwarranted perversion of the Word of God, meaning the King James Version. They also show a widespread ignorance and confusion about the Bible as God's revelation, and how it may become vitally effective for Christian living in today's world.

A basic difficulty is that to most Americans "modern speech" Bibles are entirely a recent issue. The closing appeal of the Revised Standard New Testament Preface, repeated in the new Bible, therefore seemed revolutionary when it said: ". . . the Word of God . . . must not be disguised in phrases that are no longer clear, or hidden under words that have changed or lost their meaning. It must stand forth in language that is direct and plain and meaningful to people today."¹ Yet this plea is old indeed. More than a hundred American translators have produced an even

¹ *The New Covenant Commonly Called the New Testament of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Revised Standard Version.* New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1946, p. vi.

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larger number of fresh editions of the New Testament, in part or entire, since the Secretary of the Continental Congress, Charles Thomson, became the first American to translate the Bible into English. The prefaces of this little-known host of translators are filled with discussions of the very question that now faces us. Their observations can give us a sorely needed perspective in the present confusion. It is time we allowed the translators to speak.

Nothing is more impressive to a reader of these American New Testament prefaces during the past century and a half than the almost universal urge to give the people the Scriptures in their own daily language. If wishes were deeds, the American modern speech versions should have appeared full grown in the early 1800's.

It may not seem so surprising to find the fairly recent translator of the *Riverside New Testament*, William G. Ballantine, making an appeal for modern speech Scriptures: "There are millions of people who understand no language readily except the living English of today. Surely they ought to have the New Testament—the most important of books—in that language."² Yet one hundred years earlier Alexander Campbell had decreed (1826): ". . . the changes which have taken place since the reign of James I, do now render a new translation necessary."³ Seven years later in Boston Rodolphus Dickinson asked in his New Testament preface: "Why should the received translation be permitted to perpetuate, to legalize, and almost to sanctify, many and unquestionable defects? . . . Why should the Bible be stationary, amid the progress of refinement and letters?"⁴

That same year in New Haven the father of the American dictionary, Noah Webster, explained his revised Bible in milder vein. "But in the lapse of two or three centuries, changes have taken place, which, in particular passages, impair the beauty; in others, obscure the sense, of the original languages."⁵ The Bernard Bible's New Testament preface (1842), ascribed to A. C. Kendrick, exclaimed: "To leave a single thought, which God has revealed to man, shrouded in the darkness of ancient languages,

² Ballantine, William G., *The Riverside New Testament*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1923, p. vii.

³ Campbell, Alexander, ed., *The Sacred Writings of the Apostles and Evangelists of Jesus Christ, Commonly Styled the New Testament*. Translated by G. Campbell, J. Macknight, P. Doddridge. Buffaloe, Brooke County, Virginia, 1826, p. 4.

⁴ Dickinson, Rodolphus, *A New and Corrected Version of the New Testament*. Boston, 1833, pp. xii, xiv. Dickinson was an American pioneer in the extent of his revision of the King James style. Unfortunately the quality of his work did not fulfill the high aims of his preface. The same could be said of several other translators, notably Woodruff (see note 17).

⁵ Webster, Noah, *The Holy Bible, Containing the Old and New Testaments, in the Common Version, with Amendments of the Language*. New Haven, 1833, p. iii.

or obscured through the changes which time produces in our own, can only become those who wish to take away the key of knowledge from mankind." ⁶

Harvard-Professor Andrew Norton's *Translation of the Gospels* (posthumous, 1856) "was undertaken in the conviction that no version of the Gospels existed in English which did not present many obstacles to a right understanding of them, and to a just appreciation of the evidence for their truth afforded by their internal character." ⁷ Like his predecessors, Leicester Sawyer complained in the first edition of his New Testament, in Boston:

The period that has elapsed between the publication of King James's Bible in 1611 and the present time 1858 is . . . sixteen years more than the entire period from the publication of Wickliffe's Bible in 1380 to that of King James in 1611. Besides, this has been a period of unparalleled activity in the investigation of Biblical subjects, and the prosecution of Biblical studies. . . . But the almost exclusive Bible of common life . . . with English Protestants, is still the Bible of King James, with its errors uncorrected, its interpolations unremoved, and its defects unsupplied.⁸

T. J. Conant in an introductory revision of Matthew for the justly famous American Bible Union Revision (Second Edition, 1866), was more critical of the King James Bible than most editors:

Justly pronounced imperfect, by the ripest scholars of its own and of the immediately succeeding age, it can still less be accepted as representing the critical knowledge of the present time. The fact that the numerous commentaries, professedly prepared to explain its meaning, are in great part occupied with the correction of its renderings, is sufficient evidence of the general recognition of its defects among the learned.⁹

The dictum of the contemporary Benjamin Wilson in his *Emphatic Diaglott* by this time seemed almost trite. "It is generally admitted by all critics, that the Authorized . . . version . . . absolutely needs revision."¹⁰ And at the turn of the century we find Frank S. Ballantine repeating the familiar refrain. "For while it must be admitted that King James' translation has been deservedly held in very high estimation by the most competent of critics, as well as by the people as a whole . . . it is not filling the need of the rising generation."¹¹ Father Kleist made the demand for a

⁶ *The Holy Bible; Being the English Version of the Old and New Testaments, Made by Order of King James I, Carefully Revised and Amended.* By Several Biblical Scholars. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1842. New Testament Preface, p. iv.

⁷ Norton, Andrews, *A Translation of the Gospels with Notes.* 2 vols. Vol. I, The Text. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1856, p. iii.

⁸ Sawyer, Leicester Ambrose, *The New Testament, Translated from the Original Greek.* Boston, 1858, p. v.

⁹ Conant, T. J., *The Gospel by Matthew. The Common English Version and the Received Greek Text; with a Revised Version.* New York: American Bible Union, 1860, p. v.

¹⁰ Wilson, Benjamin, *The Emphatic Diaglott: Containing the Original Greek Text of What Is Commonly Styled the New Testament . . . with an Interlineary Word for Word English Translation; A New Emphatic Version Based on the Interlineary Translation . . .* Geneva, Illinois, 1865, Preface.

¹¹ Ballantine, Frank Schell, *The Modern American Bible.* New York: Thomas Whittaker, 1899-1901, Vol. IV, p. 9.

modern version of the Bible clearly a nonsectarian affair, when in his *Gospel of Mark* in 1932 he added his voice to the chorus:

Of course, no apology at all is necessary for the general conviction that the Church's commission to render the Bible into the vernacular . . . has not expired in these latter days. . . . There is not a civilized nation under the sun at the present day but has its quota of renderings of the Scriptures into current speech that turn the latest findings of scholarship to best account.¹²

II

No less interesting than this universal demand, are the reasons given by the translators for undertaking a new version. Scholars today assure us that modern translations are necessary because of research in the Greek vocabulary of New Testament times based on recent discoveries of papyri in Egypt; new manuscripts and new knowledge carrying us much closer to the original texts of the biblical books; a better understanding of grammar and syntax of the biblical languages; and the extensive revolution in the English language that has occurred since the sixteenth century when the present Authorized Version largely took form. Our earlier American translators show no particular knowledge of the papyri, but otherwise they present these same arguments rather effectively.

The battle for textual correction, which motivated a large number of revisers in the nineteenth century, is no longer such a central element in the struggle for modern editions of Scripture. Though individual translators occasionally follow a mediocre eclectic text, the far greater accuracy of a critical text is widely accepted. There has been from the first a continuing concern for a more accurate translation. But a primary issue from the beginning is now the central issue, namely, the obsolete nature of the Elizabethan English of the King James Version. Hardly a biblical editor failed to urge this. Alexander Campbell said in his first edition under "Apology for a New Translation":

A LIVING language is continually changing. Like the fashions and customs in apparel, words and phrases, at one time current and fashionable, in the lapse of time, become awkward and obsolete. But this is not all. Many of them, in a century or two, come to have a signification very different from that which was once attached to them. Nay, some are known to convey ideas not only different from, but contrary to, their first signification. . . .¹³

In making a similar argument, Dickinson (1833) said of the King James: ". . . much of its peculiar phraseology is scarcely tolerated in any other

¹² Kleist, James A., *The Memoirs of St. Peter or the Gospel According to St. Mark, Translated into English Sense-Lines*. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1932, p. 29.

¹³ Op. cit., p. 4.

accredited form. . . . Many of those distinguished writers, who are very lavish in its praise, take the precaution not to follow its example in their own publications.”¹⁴

Noah Webster repeated precisely the same argument as Campbell, remarking that the common readers had “no access to commentaries.” He went on to make an acute observation:

In my own view of this subject, a version of the scriptures for popular use, should consist of words expressing the sense which is most common, in popular usage, so that the *first ideas* suggested to the reader should be the true meaning of such words, according to the original languages. That many words in the present version fail to do this, is certain.¹⁵

The same line of reasoning was presented by Alden Bradford¹⁶ and Hezekiah Woodruff. Dickinson and Woodruff were the two nineteenth-century forerunners of today’s modern speech versions. Woodruff remarked that the King James could be understood by its long-term students, “but it is not so with the rising generation.”¹⁷ He dedicated his translation to a query from Scripture itself (Acts 8:30), “Do you understand the book you are reading?” It was clear that the common people did not, as several editors pointed out, from the space commentaries devoted to explanations of the old vocabulary. But commentaries were no answer for the average person. So the translators tried, as Charles Foster Kent said in his *Shorter Bible*, to render “the original texts of the Bible into simple, modern English which will present the thought of biblical writers so plainly and directly that commentaries will be unnecessary.”¹⁸

In fact, as Father Vosté said in the preface to Father Spencer’s New Testament, “There is no better commentary than a good translation in a modern tongue.”¹⁹ He applied this dictum to the biblical books of history, wisdom, and the Psalms. Most of the translators would defend the sweeping generalization. Thus William Ballantine made no new assertion when he said that though the King James is “the Westminster Abbey of English literature,” yet “for inquirers eager to know the divine message, it is three hundred years behind the times.”²⁰

¹⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. ix.

¹⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. iii.

¹⁶ Bradford, Alden, *Evangelical History; or the Books of the New Testament*. Vol. I, *The Four Gospels*. Boston, 1836, p. 2.

¹⁷ Woodruff, Hezekiah, *An Exposition of the New Testament, or the New Covenant of our Sovereign Saviour the Anointed*. Auburn, New York, 1852, Introduction.

¹⁸ Kent, Charles Foster, ed., *The Shorter Bible: The New Testament*. New York, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1918, Preface.

¹⁹ Spencer, Francis Aloysisius, *The New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ Translated into English from the Original Greek*, ed. by C. J. Callan and John A. McHugh. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937, p. ix.

²⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. v.

III

Not only have many words become unfamiliar or changed meaning, but many features of the King James English style have become archaic or obsolescent. Typical examples are the third person endings of verbs, such as "sitteth" for "sits," and "hath" for "has"; and the familiar "thou" and "thee" of intimate address. These do not greatly interfere with the meaning of a passage, but they do create a strong atmosphere of age or quaintness. So far has such usage been restricted to the Bible during the past century and more—Shakespeare and his contemporaries are read far less often by the average man—that it has come to be known as "biblical" or "sacred." A recent translation of early Christian apocryphal books deliberately used this Elizabethan-Jacobean construction to convey to the reader the sense that these books were essentially "biblical" and primitive Christian. Current writers occasionally adopt the style to create a "biblical" setting or because it is felt to be more appropriate for "religious" themes.

The halo of continued sacred use gives it, for the average reader, a certain poetic quality. So strong is this emotional attachment, added to the natural grace and vigor of King James phrases, that a modern young person on hearing for the first time a modern version read in a church service, was quite normal when she exclaimed, "Why, that isn't the Bible!" The same pattern of feeling for the familiar and beloved has retained the Psalter of the Great Bible in the Anglican Book of Common Prayer against successive efforts to replace it with the Bishops' and King James revisions. This resistance to change in sacred patterns is the largest factor in the current problem of whether the Revised Standard Bible or a similar modernized version can succeed the King James and become a fourth "Authorized" version.

While common custom recognizes such a strong attachment to the archaic style of the "received version," the translators as a whole do not. T. J. Conant, while by no means minded to revise the King James too radically, said in his preface to Matthew in 1860:

The writer is no advocate for a *sacred style*, differing in its forms from that of social intercourse; much less of a quaintness, savoring of affectation and cant. The sacred writers used no affected form of speech; but expressed themselves with a simple earnestness and directness, in unsought, unstudied terms, to which the plain Saxon element of our speech so happily corresponds.²¹

"We might as reasonably contend," Alexander Campbell had written in his 1828 edition, "that men should appear in the public assemblies for worship

²¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. vii, viii.

with long beards, in Jewish or Roman garments, as that the scriptures should be handed to us in a style perfectly antiquated, and consequently less intelligible.”²² In the same discussion he made the penetrating observation that the antiquated “sacred” style was simply that in which the translators commonly wrote, and for proof quoted a bit of their preface. Strictly speaking, we should qualify this slightly, since nine-tenths of the King James dates from the preceding century; but this does not affect his general principle. What is needed now is a new version in which the translators will use the style of *their* century.

Other translators expressed much the same idea in their own way. Rodolphus Dickinson used words that sound strange to our ears because their connotations have changed, but he was arguing simply for a version fitted for daily home use when he asked: “Why should not an edition of the heavenly institutes be furnished for the readingroom, saloon, and toilet, as well as for the church, school, and nursery, for the literary and accomplished gentleman, as well as for the plain and unlettered citizen?”²³ Even Noah Webster complained of the King James, “There are also some quaint and vulgar phrases which are not relished by those who love a pure style. . . .” As a student of language, Webster was concerned over the effects of an obsolete version on popular English usage.

The language of the Bible has no inconsiderable influence in forming and preserving our national language. On this account, then, the language of the common version ought to be correct. . . . This is the more important, as men who are accustomed to read the Bible with veneration, are apt to contract a predilection for its phraseology, and thus become attached to phrases which are quaint or obsolete. This . . . impairs the purity of the language, and is apt to create a disrelish for it in those who have not, by long practice, contracted a like predilection.²⁴

Not only did the King James revisers follow a colloquial style not too far removed from their time; the Bible writers themselves had done so, as the Improved Version observed: “The sacred writers used the current style of the languages in which they wrote. A version filled with archaic forms and obsolete or obsolescent words, may be deemed to exhibit a ‘sacred style,’ but it misrepresents the manner of the inspired penmen.”²⁵ It was in the same spirit that W. D. Dillard a quarter of a century before had announced his aim in translating the New Testament:

²² Second ed., 1828, pp. 449-50.

²³ *Op. cit.*, p. xii.

²⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. iv.

²⁵ *The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments: An Improved Edition*. Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1913, New Testament Preface.

Now we propose to render every word in the New Testament Greek into plain vernacular English words; just as they would now be written, if the facts they relate had occurred in our day and in our country. So that all, especially the poor, the "illiterate and unlearned," may understand the teachings of Jesus and his apostles. Because the New Testament was written for this class of people, not for the rich and learned. . . .²⁶

An antique style misrepresents not only the King James translators, and the Bible writers; it also misrepresents Jesus and his teachings. J. W. Hanson insisted in 1884 that the language of Jesus and his disciples

. . . must have been quite colloquial, and in order to reproduce their meaning in English, certainly the Gospels, Acts, James's and John's epistles should be couched in common phraseology. The nearer a version succeeds in employing everyday speech, the closer it will be to the spirit of the New Testament.²⁷

In the same manner James Cardinal Gibbons wrote in the preface for the Gospels (1898) by Father Spencer, that the latter "has endeavored to represent Our Lord and the apostles as speaking, not in an antique style, but in the language they would speak if they lived among us now."²⁸

Edgar J. Goodspeed thus spoke for a great body of American translators when he wrote in 1923:

The New Testament was written not in classical Greek, nor in the "biblical" Greek of the Greek version of the Old Testament, nor even in the literary Greek of its own day, but in the common language of everyday life. . . . It follows that the most appropriate English form for the New Testament is the simple, straightforward English of everyday expression.

. . . The writers of the New Testament had for the most part little use for literary art. The principle figure among them, the apostle Paul, said this in so many words. They put their message in the simplest and most direct terms they could command, so that it spoke directly to the common life of their day. The great passages in the New Testament owe their greatness more to the trenchant vigor of their thought, or the moral sublimity of their ideas, than to the graces of rhetoric.²⁹

F. S. Ballantine, a pioneer of American modern speech versions, in answer to the claim that removing the "sacred" character of the Bible would destroy the love and reverence of the common people, wrote: "The story of the life of Jesus the Christ needs neither love nor reverence that

²⁶ Dillard, W. D., *The Teachings and Acts of Jesus of Nazareth and His Apostles Literally Translated out of the Greek*. Chicago, 1885, p. v.

²⁷ Hanson, J. W., *The New Covenant: Containing I. An Accurate Translation of the New Testament. II. A Harmony of the Four Gospels. III. A Chronological Arrangement of the Text. IV. A Brief and Handy Commentary. Vol. I, The Four Gospels*. Boston: Universalist Publishing House, 1884, p. viii.

²⁸ Spencer, Francis Aloysius, *The Four Gospels: A New Translation from the Greek Text Direct with Reference to the Vulgate and the Ancient Syriac Version*. New York, 1898, p. v.

²⁹ Goodspeed, Edgar J., *The New Testament: An American Translation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1923, p. v.

is not the result of its own intrinsic charm."³⁰ On the contrary, that charm is often masked behind archaic and "rude" forms, Dickinson had said. The older versions "may be compared to valuable mines, in which the materials require painful excavation. . . ." ³¹ Several translators, indeed, expressed the fear that an archaic version would drive people away from the Bible and religion. Professor Nathaniel Folsom, after commenting that the King James was "not the speech of the people," concluded:

There is real danger, from the contrast, of putting religion apart from life and making it a form. Nor is it an idle conjecture, that this ancient style is one of the occasions of an increasing neglect of the New Testament among those trained almost wholly under the influences of modern literature. . . .³²

Goodspeed pointed out that the form of the King James prevented most people from reading it as a real and living book.

But few indeed sit down and read the New Testament in that version continuously and understandingly, a book at a time, as it was written to be read. The antique diction, the mechanical method of translation, and the disturbing verse division retard and discourage the reader. The aim of the present translation has been to present the meaning of the different books . . . in English of the same kind as the Greek of the original, so that they may be continuously and understandingly read. There is no book in the New Testament that cannot easily be read at a sitting.³³

IV

Though these demands for a modern vocabulary and style, along with a more correct text, formed the main body of the preface arguments, the American translators did not overlook the inaccuracies of the King James translation itself. Tremendous progress had indeed been made in biblical studies since 1611. As Campbell put it, scholars were "now in possession of much better means of making a translation, than they were at the time when the common version appeared. The original is now much better understood than it was then."³⁴ Kendrick was more specific:

The publication of polyglotts; the collation of ancient manuscripts and versions; the multiplication of grammars, lexicons, concordances, and critical dissertations; the enlarged comparison of the affinities of oriental dialect; the researches of travellers into the geography, manners, customs, natural history of the East; the more accurate tables of chronology, coins, weights, and measures, and the more advanced state of

³⁰ Ballentine, Frank Schell, *Good News: The Four Gospels in a Modern American Dress*. Scranton, Pa., 1897, p. viii.

³¹ *Op. cit.*, p. x.

³² Folsom, Nathaniel S., *The Four Gospels: Translated from the Greek Text of Tischendorf, with Various Readings*. Boston, 1869, pp. v, vi.

³³ *Op. cit.*, p. vi.

³⁴ *Op. cit.*, 1826 edition, p. 6.

scriptural criticism; have all tended to enrich us with facilities for performing such a work to which our fathers were strangers.³⁵

He cited Romans 6:17, for example, where the King James says "that God is thanked that the Roman converts had been the servants of sin, instead of being thanked for their conversion." In general, he went on to say, "Nothing can more forcibly strike the attentive reader of the common version of the New Testament, than the great inequality in the style and merit of its execution."³⁶

Referring to this new biblical knowledge, Dickinson exclaimed with high optimism, "The triumphant advance of the human faculties is not to be arrested."³⁷ Given such tremendous advance in knowledge, Sawyer concluded:

The only way in which the vast stores of Biblical learning accumulated . . . by the labors of seven and a half generations . . . can become available for the general benefit of the people, is by an improved text and translation of the Bible, into which, as far as possible, they shall all be brought, and to the perfection of which they shall contribute.³⁸

For those few who followed an extreme form of verbal inspiration it was most essential, as F. W. Grant said, that all imperfections of translation be removed which obscured "the absolute perfection of the Inspired Word."³⁹ The overwhelming majority spoke for no such extreme view, yet were just as insistent that the truths of the Bible be rendered accurately. They felt as did H. T. Anderson, who dedicated his New Testament (1866) "To ALL Lovers of Truth," and having seen early in life that a new translation was necessary, "was not disposed to be trammelled by any version, but desired to find the truth of God, as it is contained in the Original."⁴⁰

Thus James Moffatt effectively summed up the arguments of American translators as to King James inaccuracies when he urged:

Let the version remain an English classic. But let us be certain about the truth of what it translates. There is a truth in beauty of style, but there is a beauty in truth, and whatever we may lose in parting with an English classic, we gain more by contact with the actual meaning of the original.⁴¹

³⁵ *Op. cit.*, New Testament, p. iii.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. iii.

³⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. vii.

³⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. viii.

³⁹ Grant, F. W., *The Numerical Bible, Being a Revised Translation of the Holy Scriptures. Arranged . . . According to the Principles of Their Numerical Structure.* New York, 1899, Vol. IV, Preface.

⁴⁰ Anderson, H. T., *The New Testament Translated from the Original Greek, Revised Edition.* Louisville, Kentucky, 1866, p. 3.

⁴¹ Moffatt, James, *The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments: A New Translation.* New York: Richard R. Smith, 1926, p. xxxviii.

Even had there been no changing language nor advancing biblical scholarship, fresh translation would still be desirable. We must realize, said Overbury:

. . . how utterly fallacious it is to hold that any particular version can be an absolutely correct reproduction of the original writer's thought.

Whether consciously or unconsciously, every translator necessarily colors his version more or less by his own views; for a translator cannot intelligibly re-render a foreign language word for word, but must endeavor to convey the idiomatic sense of the original into the idioms of the more modern language; and here is where the element of personal judgment appears.⁴²

As Father Kleist expressed it:

Translation is above all a method of approach, a mood, an attitude. . . . Such . . . is the translator's first duty, . . . to realize that he stands before a classic, a classic which, like all classics, lures him on, which invites fresh interpretation, which requires to be scanned from a new coign of vantage in order to reveal some excellence which it has not revealed before. It is this principle that accounts for the numerous renderings of the New Testament which have appeared in almost every country in recent times. Dealing with the same grand theme, they are yet different, because each tries to read anew the mind of its authors, and each places the same original in a light not seen before.⁴³

V

We owe much to the largely unrecognized work of this great company of American translators. They have given leadership for a century and a half of advance toward the modern critical versions, and their pre-eminent American examples, the Smith-Goodspeed and Moffatt Bibles. Unknowingly they helped produce the somewhat more conservative but official revision, the new Revised Standard. Above all, they offer us now the insight that we *must* allow the classic King James to give way to a new and modern translation, if the Bible is to be a living force in our new age. We need a common version which will do for us what the King James did for a former day. For it is as true now as it was in 1833 in the generation of Dickinson that "no book can give permanent law to language; and an unalterable version of the Bible is no part . . . of orthodoxy."⁴⁴ Or as Ballentine said in his 1897 Gospels, we should hold to the substance, not the dress, of the Scriptures, for "no living thing can be forever contained in one unchanging form."⁴⁵

⁴² Overbury, Arthur E., *The People's New Testament (New Covenant)*, Scriptural Writings Translated from the Meta-physical Standpoint. Monrovia, Calif., 1925-32, pp. 1, 2.

⁴³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 29-31.

⁴⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. ix.

⁴⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. viii.

The Eucharistic Hymns of the Wesleys

JOHN ROBERT VAN PELT

I

THESE HYMNS ARE one hundred and seventy-six in number. Written in the early 1740's, they were published in 1745, "with a Preface concerning *The Sacrament and Sacrifice*, extracted from Dr. Brevint." On the title page the names of both John and Charles Wesley appear as authors; but it is generally believed that nearly, if not quite, all the pieces are from the hand of Charles.

There are today weighty considerations calling for a fresh and serious study of these hymns. I mention first an important yet not the chief consideration. It is the fact that many of them possess rare literary merit. But their chief claim upon our attention lies in their relation to the course of Christian thought and the present-day teaching of the church.

The historical interest asserts itself in various and, in part, unexpected ways. That the historian of Christian thought and life must pay careful attention to Methodist hymnody is obvious; for it is in its hymnody that the spirit and intention of the whole movement manifests itself most clearly. But the historian, if he pursues his inquiry patiently, will discover that later generations of Methodists have largely neglected or even—in some quarters—definitely repudiated these eucharistic hymns. British Methodists, it is true, still cherish a number of them, but American Methodists have at length discarded them all. The Methodist Episcopal Hymnal of 1878 still retained two of them, but the later editions omitted even these. On the other hand, it is worthy of note that among British Methodists an association has been formed having for its express object the revival of the early Wesleyan doctrine of the Eucharist.

More striking, and perhaps of greater significance, is the lively interest in the Wesleyan eucharistic hymns that has sprung up in the Anglican communion. The long-persisting antipathy of most of the clergy of the Church of England toward all that was called Methodist is of late much moderated or even largely passed away. The churchly-mindedness of the Wesleys

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(especially of Charles) is now gladly recognized. In consequence, Anglican hymnologists are now turning eagerly to "the rich storehouse of the hymns of the Wesleys," and in particular to their hymns on the Lord's Supper.

The first Wesleyan hymn to break through the barrier of prejudice more than a century ago was "Hark the herald angels sing." This was soon followed by such festival hymns as "Rejoice! the Lord is King" and "Lo! He comes with clouds descending," and by the irresistible "Jesu, Lover of my soul." The first Anglican compiler to do approximate justice to Charles Wesley was Roundell Palmer. In the second (enlarged) edition of his famous *Book of Praise* (1864) we find twenty-eight of Wesley's hymns. This shows a remarkable expansion of appreciation of Wesley's genius. Yet it did not go far enough. Not only was no eucharistic hymn of his included, but even such gems as "Love divine, all loves excelling" and "Come, thou long-expected Jesus" were passed by.

Upon its first appearance in 1861 *Hymns Ancient and Modern* swiftly gained an immense popularity in the Church of England, which it maintained until well into the twentieth century. Not only did the first edition of the book give no place to the eucharistic hymns of the Wesleys, but the same is true also of the expanded editions of 1868 and 1875. The "Supplement" of 1889, however, introduced two of the best of them. These were: "Victim divine, thy grace we claim" and (altered in the opening lines)

O thou before the world began
Ordained a sacrifice for man.

(The original text is given below.) The fine "New Edition" of the famous hymn-book (1904) was emphatically rejected by most of the parishes of the country because of the setting aside of many well-loved tunes of the Dykes-Barnby-Stainer school. But we should not fail to note that it included one more of Wesley's communion hymns.

The unexpected rejection of the "New Edition" at once made it evident that something must be done for the millions who were still clinging fondly to the "Old" in spite of its deficiencies. Therefore, in 1916, an excellent *Second Supplement to the Old Edition* was published. This event has significance for our present study. It gives striking evidence of the growing interest in the hymns of Charles Wesley in general and his hymns on the Lord's Supper in particular. I quote from the Preface. "A large proportion of the more modern hymns are taken from the inexhaustible store of the Wesleys." (Here several notable ones are mentioned, two of which are not to be found in the current edition of the *Methodist Hymnal*.)

"The Eucharistic hymns of the Wesleys are still too little known; four more of them are printed in this Supplement." Some years earlier some of them had appeared in *The English Hymnal* (1906) and in *The Oxford Hymn Book* (1908).

This, in brief, is the historical situation and background: Anglicans are turning to the eucharistic hymns of the Wesleys with marked interest and appreciation; many British Methodists are seeking to revive the original strong Wesleyan emphasis upon the significance of the Sacrament; among American Methodists there is a faint stirring of interest looking in the same direction—it cannot, as yet, be called a movement.

But are there not urgent reasons why Christians of all branches of the church should strive for a clear understanding of this mystery? A complete agreement at every point may be impossible, even as it seems unnecessary. But respecting the heart of the matter, may we not *all* hope to apprehend the truth and come to full mutual understanding? At present our differences are decidedly wide. At one extreme is the Roman Catholic dogma of transubstantiation and the continual renewal of the sacrifice. At the other extreme are those who see in the rite nothing more than a solemn memorial. Still, there are relatively few Protestants who would accept the cutting observation of Alice Meynell (a Roman Catholic): "Yes, you have *the real absence*." Zwingli strongly affirmed his belief in the real, though not the bodily presence. Surely there are very few Protestants who would affirm less. Many of us would be unable to sing, *ex animo*, a Roman Catholic *Ave verum* ("Hail, true Body") or *Tantum ergo*; but even High Anglicans find Horatius Bonar's "Here, O my Lord, I see thee face to face" perfectly acceptable. Why so? Is it not because this Presbyterian goes straight to the heart of the matter, leaving room for minor differences? But this does not mean compromise in matters of faith: that is to be abhorred. It means the humble seeking, on every hand, for the mind of the Spirit.

Therefore, for the sake of encouraging critical and prayerful reflection on the theme, I present, in whole or in part, some of the best of Wesley's eucharistic hymns, adding only a few brief comments.

II

Of the whole number of Wesley's eucharistic hymns the following seems to have gained the widest acceptance. Others are warmer and richer in imagination, but this first one has the merit of saying impressively that in which all Christians are agreed.

RELIGION IN LIFE

Author of life divine,
 Who hast a table spread,
 Furnished with mystic wine
 And everlasting bread,
 Preserve the life thyself hast given,
 And feed and train us up for heaven.

Our needy souls sustain
 With fresh supplies of love,
 Till all thy life we gain,
 And all thy fulness prove,
 And, strengthened by thy perfect grace,
 Behold without a veil thy face.

Concerning our second selection, there may be some who, in spite of its richness of thought and imagery, will find its controversial standpoint too much elaborated. Against a rationalizing point of view Wesley contends for the immediacy of the sacrifice, while against Rome he affirms that it is not continually repeated. Although once accomplished many centuries ago, "Thy offering still continues new." One must not fail to note the use of the present tense in the closing line. I quote the hymn in its original form.

O thou eternal Victim, slain
 A sacrifice for guilty man,
 By the eternal Spirit made
 An offering in the sinner's stead;
 Our everlasting priest art thou,
 And plead'st thy death for sinners now.

Thy offering still continues new,
 Thy vesture keeps its bloody hue;
 Thou stand'st the ever-slaughtered Lamb,
 Thy priesthood still remains the same;
 Thy years, O God, can never fail,
 Thy goodness is unchangeable.

O that our faith may never move,
 But stand unshaken as his love;
 Sure evidence of things unseen,
 Now may it pass the years between
 And view thee bleeding on the tree,
 My God who dies for me, for me.

Of another fine hymn three verses out of five are given.

Victim divine, thy grace we claim,
 While thus thy precious death we show;
 Once offered up, a spotless Lamb,
 In thy great temple here below,
 Thou dost for all mankind atone,
 And standest now before the throne.

Thou standest in the holiest place,
 As now for guilty sinners slain;
 Thy blood of sprinkling speaks, and prays,
 All-prevalent for helpless man;
 Thy blood is still our ransom found,
 And spreads forgiveness all around.

We need not now go up to heaven,
 To bring the long-sought Saviour down;
 Thou art to all already given,
 Thou dost e'en now thy banquet crown;
 To every faithful soul appear,
 And show thy real presence here.

Just what did Wesley mean by the words, "thy real presence"? Certainly not the Roman Catholic doctrine. And certainly not the doctrine of strict Lutheran orthodoxy. The question is put for the reader's own inquiry and answer. At any rate, we know that for Charles Wesley the Lord's Supper was "no dead, external rite." It is plain that in his view no rite would be a sacrament without the presence of Christ in it.

Many of the hymns in this little volume are fine throughout; others contain brilliant passages along with some of less merit. Here follows the first stanza of a hymn of four verses, all equally fine.

Lamb of God, whose bleeding love
 We now recall to mind,
 Send the answer from above,
 And let us mercy find;
 Think on us who think on thee,
 And every struggling soul release;
 O remember Calvary,
 And bid us go in peace.

Each verse ends with the same two lines.

The other specimen is from a hymn of four verses, all very vigorous.

Who is this that comes from far,
 Clad in garments dipt in blood!
 Strong, triumphant Traveler,
 Is he man, or is he God?

I close with a short hymn much admired by many, yet too little known. Although fitly placed among the eucharistic hymns, its theme is not the Lord's Supper exclusively, but the established means of grace in general. In several collections the sense has been spoiled by reading "thence" in the last verse, instead of the original and necessary "hence."

RELIGION IN LIFE

Happy the souls to Jesus joined,
And saved by grace alone;
Walking in all thy ways we find
Our heaven on earth begun.

The church triumphant in thy love
Their mighty joys we know;
They sing the Lamb in hymns above,
And we in hymns below.

Thee in thy glorious realm they praise,
And bow before thy throne;
We in the kingdom of thy grace:
The kingdoms are but one.

The Holy to the Holiest leads,
From hence our spirits rise;
And he who in thy statutes treads
Shall meet thee in the skies.

Book Reviews

Intercommunion. Edited by DONALD BAILLIE and JOHN MARSH. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952. 406 pp. \$4.00.

As an outcome of the Edinburgh Conference on Faith and Order in 1937, three International Theological Commissions were appointed. Their task was to study respectively the Church, Ways of Worship, and Intercommunion. The recent volume *Intercommunion* represents the fruits of labor of the third Commission, the one admittedly given the most exacting assignment. This volume contains the able Report submitted to the third World Conference at Lund in 1952 along with a copious and representative selection of essays and studies presented to the Commission.

The resultant work is a definitive presentation of the problem of intercommunion in all its phases and from almost all possible angles. It is a foundation symposium which no serious student of Reunion or devotee of the Ecumenical Movement can afford not to know well. *Intercommunion* is particularly timely at the present juncture of events, for Lund underlined what was already written in the bold letters of fact for all to read, that the first phase of the Reunion movement had ended and a new stage begun.

The first period had two heroic personal symbols: Charles Henry Brent and William Temple. Both were Anglicans, and this period was dominated by Anglican "ideology." The directing theme and ideal was "organic union." Under the exalted leadership of Brent and Temple, Reunion on this pattern was seen not as a far-off goal, a kind of eschatological vision, but as something that could fire the church and that could be realized soon in the here and now. I know, for I was at Edinburgh, and I was close to Temple and under the spell of his matchless consecration to the one Lord and the one Body—His very own self. For me as for so many at that time, Temple made the Ephesian vision of the Church sublimely real and absolutely compelling.

It is nonetheless clear and certain that Reunion is not coming this way any time soon. The power of finite assertiveness and self-centeredness, which seems to be compounded in institutions and in consequence to be more intransigent and inaccessible than in individuals, has proven too strong. The strains of war and the frustrations of an almost total failure to win peace are doubtless an additional factor. Everywhere conflict is stepped up and the evil that is transindividual and demonic is more openly manifest. A very striking example of this in church life is the deterioration of Protestant-Catholic relations; I believe also that a similar spirit is at work in a general hardening of denominational lines and of tensions within denominations. Anyway, Temple's successor as Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Geoffrey Fisher, enunciated right after World War II a new doctrine of Reunion—that it must come, if at all, in the foreseeable future by the method of intercommunion. Bodies now existing and going their separate ways must continue their distinctive individual existence, but they are under a mandate not to remain separate. They must make mutually satisfactory arrangements for a commonly accepted ministry and enter into communion with one another. Then there will be a basis for growing into one another, and both or all growing up into Christ.

Even this theory of procedure has not won universal acceptance or as yet

shown tangible results in Church Reunion. I believe, however, that it is clearly the one method that has promise for the present in America and Europe and that the Reunion movement is now in an Intercommunion phase. If this analysis is sound, the volume produced by the third Commission of the Faith and Order Section of the World Council is of particular relevance.

The volume *Intercommunion* is divided in three parts. Part I is the text of the Report of the Commission on Intercommunion. Part II consists of four "Historical Studies of the Problem," covering the Undivided Church, the Reformation, the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Centuries, and the Ecumenical Movement. These studies, all competent and workmanlike, are by a Russian Orthodox, a German Lutheran, a British Baptist, and an Anglican—an interesting array of heavy artillery. Part III, which constitutes over one half of the volume, is a collection of independent and very loosely related essays that have to do with intercommunion as a present problem. These contributions were written at the request of the Commission as part of its total study or were submitted in some other way. They differ in value but together are a rich mine of material for the student of this vexed subject. Finally, there are two appendices: one a compendium of the existing rules and customs of the churches, based on two previous studies published as Booklets 98 and 99 of the Faith and Order Series in 1942 and 1944; the other a novel account of the revival of the Agape in Hilgay, Norfolk, England, by Anglicans and Methodists jointly.

It is in no way a disparagement of the other essays in *Intercommunion* or of the very able summary job managed by the Commission in its Report, if in conclusion we single out for special mention two essays. The first (numbered XVII in the volume) is Professor Edmund Schlink of Germany's "Lord's Supper or Church's Supper." In an acute piece of dialectical reasoning Professor Schlink argues that there is here no legitimate "either-or." At the same time he prophetically reminds us all that the name of this sacred feast is "the Lord's Supper." As such it is for the whole flock of Jesus Christ the Shepherd. This consideration forces on us a grave self-questioning, which is a reversal of the questioning we are prone to engage in. "Whereas hitherto we had thought that only others had given up the unity of true doctrine and order, we now recognize that we are questioned whether we have not done so ourselves. Anybody who has not yet experienced this shattering reversal of the questioning is still outside the gate of real ecumenical encounter."

The other essay (VII in the volume) which we would star as *must* reading is Dean A. T. DeGroot's "Intercommunion in the Non-clerical Tradition." Dean DeGroot is the only United States contributor except the Orthodox Father Florovsky, now of New York City. DeGroot's paper was read to the Commission at Bièvres in 1950 and by its forthrightness and radicalism created a mild sensation. I do not personally agree with DeGroot's Pelagian, pragmatic, and laic position which he puts forward as the doctrine held by the Disciples of Christ. At the same time there is no good dodging the fact that he represents, as I tried in 1950 to explain to the Commission, something widespread and indigenous in American Christianity. In addition, without knowing much of it in detail, I have always felt that the unique recovery by the Disciples of the Lord's Supper as a weekly and central service of the Church was a phenomenon of momentous significance.

To conclude, not the least notable feature of our troubled time is the extent to which in the United States the winds of the Spirit are blowing hither and thither with tremendous power. Will the old-line Protestant Churches be recipients of

this power and prove themselves channels for its effective and constructive ordering? They will, in my judgment, only if they are able to discover in a new way the meaning of sacramental religion and to experience a Protestant counterpart of the historical centrality of the Holy Communion. To come to grips with the problem of Intercommunion in its full scope and complexity might well be for individuals and churches a *praeparatio* for the rejuvenation of Reformed Religion.

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The Taming of the Nations. A Study of the Cultural Bases of International Policy. By F. S. C. NORTHROP. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1952. xii-362 pp. \$5.00.

This is an important book. Although it has been written for the specific purpose of discovering the bases of the major cultures affecting world movements today, it is broader in scope than this desperately needed purpose would suggest. Here meet the findings of the philosopher, the social scientist (particularly the anthropologist), the political and legal historian, to create a vast network of intercultural understanding which can be of use in the formation of international policy.

"To achieve, therefore, a trustworthy guide for international policy in the contemporary world we shall have to do three things. First, the normative inner order of beliefs and habits which is the living law of each national or cultural group in the world must be specified. Second, the relation between the normative ideology of each nation or cultural group and that of all other nations and cultural groups must be determined. In certain cases this relationship will be found to be one of compatibility. In other cases it will be found to be that of logical incompatibility and contradiction. This means that no single theory of the way to relate nations can be specified as a universal policy or panacea applicable to all nations. Nor should this surprise us. For if nations differ from one another with respect to their properties, just as do chemical elements, certain combinations of nations will produce a peaceful response whereas certain other combinations of nations, if pressed, will issue in an explosion. . . . Having specified the normative living law of each individual nation or cultural group and having specified also the respective relations between these diverse national normative inner orders, the third task will be that of framing foreign policy and international law in the light of these international living law findings."

We cannot continue, without international disaster, to disregard, with a facile use of the honored method of war, the materials now available to us in this day of multi-nerved culture contact. Hence, the ground broken by Professor Northrop, promised so vividly in his *The Meeting of East and West*, may serve as the foundation, with other like studies, of a new diplomacy.

Two things are necessary in the consideration of a work such as this. First, are the criteria here used for the understanding of a culture valid for universal application? And to how profound and pragmatic an understanding do these criteria lead the author?

Professor Northrop arrives at his conclusion concerning the inner nature of a culture through the view of Nature, and the way of knowing it, commonly accepted within the culture. There is no quarrel on the part of this reviewer with these criteria. The job of the ideally-constituted scholar-diplomat-politician is especially tough when concerned with a people philosophically inarticulate. The author would

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seem to feel that the anthropologist-turned-philosopher and social analyst can furnish enough data to arrive with a sure touch. Perhaps these scientists, themselves, are not so optimistic as yet.

On page 3, Northrop says, "Fortunately recent investigations in the sciences of cultural sociology, cultural anthropology and the philosophy of culture give us an answer to this question"; the question being, "what is the method for specifying the properties of the elements of international relations?" Prof. Clyde Kluckhohn, whom he quotes as having shown "how the scientific determination of the normative inner order of a specified society is to be achieved," himself says, "make no mistake about it; we social scientists are still chipping flints in the Stone Age of our science." (*Saturday Review*, April 4, 1953.)

After a statement of the nature of the problem and its historical urgency, Professor Northrop plunges into an analysis of various cultures which are in significant process of change. The amount of space given to each of these depends upon the degree of understanding which it is normal and natural for a Westerner to have of that particular culture. Most space is given to the problems of India, because there we find most of our Western bafflement by the position of dynamic neutrality which India has chosen for herself. Islam is also given a great deal of thought and attention.

After having read, with pleasure and substantial agreement, the chapter on "The Contemporary Mind of Islam and of Asia," it was with a certain degree of discomfort that we found the liberal—almost exclusive—use of the work of Muhammad Iqbal as illustrative of the resurgence of Islam. Northrop sees little difficulty, nor do we, in an at-homeness with the Muslim in his Hebrew-Christian, Graeco-Roman cultural traditions. Once the West understands the normative living law of Islam, all will be well. But he bases that optimism on what we feel to be an inadequate sense of the inner struggle of Islam in the attempt to relate itself to the West. It might be legitimate to rely completely on the thought of Muhammad Iqbal as representative, if one were to consider Pakistan alone—or even Pakistan as a potential leader of a new unity in the Islamic world. But Professor Gibb, in his *Mohammadanism* (London, 1950), remarks: "There is little evidence that it (Iqbal's reformulation of Islamic doctrine) has gained a following outside India."

We can agree up to a point that there is a striving after greater cultural unity in Islam, but we see no evidence of the decline of nationalism as suggested by Northrop. We are now experiencing the phenomenon of mutual support by Muslim nations of nationalisms which in themselves seem even to be strengthening. The Islamic sections could do with a more sensitive approach to transliteration and terminology. It is also baffling to find such provocative statements as the following, that "one of the most important centers for the spread of Communism in Islam is . . . the El Azhar in Cairo," submitted without substantiating evidence.

Professor Northrop treats of seven major cultural political units in the contemporary world:

"(1) The Asian solidarity of India, Ceylon, Tibet, Burma, Thailand, Indo-China, China, Korea and Japan rooted in the basic philosophical and cultural similarity of non-Aryan Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism.

"(2) The Islamic world rooted in the religious and philosophical faith and reconstruction of a resurgent Islam.

"(3) The non-Islamic, non-European African world rooted in its lesser known culture.

"(4) The continental European Union grounded in a predominantly Roman Catholic culture with a secular leadership that has passed through the liberalizing influence of modern philosophical thought.

"(5) The British Commonwealth with its predominantly Protestant British empirical philosophical traditions combined with the bond of unity derived through classical education, English law, the Church of England and its Royal Family from a Stoic Christian Rome that has passed through Hooker's, the Tudors' and Cromwell's versions of the Protestant Reformation.

"(6) Pan America rooted in the liberal constitutionalism of the common law of the United States on the one hand and the modern equivalent of Cicero's liberal Stoic Roman legal universalism on the other hand as expressed in governments, and even education, under secular leadership.

"(7) The Soviet Communistic world comprising the U.S.S.R., her Eastern European satellites, mainland China and North Korea."

The analysis of contemporary India with her needs in the development of domestic policies, including technological necessities for her happier economic future, is a task of extreme difficulty. For purposes of understanding, Northrop has broken up the problem into a consideration of what he terms "Gandhi's Asian-Buddhist-Bhagavadgita-Hindu-India," and "Aryan Hindu India." These two elements he must consider in relation to the other religious and cultural communities which exist in India, including the large minority of Muslims who still remain in Bharat. There is scarcely space in a review of this length to discuss and criticize the treatment of these compartments into which he throws the life and thought of India.

Professor Northrop is trying to arrive at helpful generalizations with reference to which the policy maker may be guided in his over-all function. One aspect of his thinking, which is to me a little precarious, is the danger of making generalizations on assumptions prompted by a selection of material and of contemporary events which fit the formula. In some ways this seems to create an inflexibility that ill serves the major purpose of this book.

The "Indian mind" has always had as its supreme genius an intuitive synthetic bent which would allow a type of syncretism that cannot be pigeonholed and catalogued with any degree of finality, no matter what the mathematical formulae applied to it. The present situation is so complex that the only valid conclusions to which one can come are esthetic ones. It is, however, very helpful and suggestive to contemplate the primary criteria for understanding in relation to the Indian himself. This would perhaps give weight to the diplomatic approach suggested by Northrop, which would have to be some sort of combination of the direct warm personal or personally decided policy with that based on legal procedure resulting from the generalized formulae. Caution should be urged in the acceptance of the generalizations of this volume without criticism; for in these generalizations lie its most disturbing aspects.

There are numerous statements of very doubtful or debatable fact. Some of these did not need to be made. For instance, when he says that ". . . in any mosque . . . there is no written mark or sign except for the script 'There is no God but God.'" A much more accurate statement would be that calligraphy is the only decorative motif which conveys meaning and definition. Quotations may be from Qu'ranic or even non-Qu'ranic sources, but they are certainly not limited to the Confession.

This book certainly suggests that there is much ground to be worked over by those expert in certain cultural areas of the world to produce the type of synthesis which would allow those who sit in the seat of interpretation, such as Professor Northrop, adequately to summarize and analyze these cultures. The material we have now is too partial, or based too entirely upon literary sources, or too expertly treated in part rather than as a whole. This is one of the great services that scholarship in these fields can contribute more completely.

I state again that this is an important book. One sadly wonders whether the good sense that such an attempt makes can ever be grasped by our present generation of statesmen; for this implies the Scholar-Statesman, of whom the world possesses all too few. There is a very definite American bias to this book which suggests a foreign policy on the part of the United States, based on the realities of what makes other folk tick. And although we may have the first gropings after an understanding of this problem, we still have to convince a voting populace that such men must be put in positions of authority with this kind of intellectual equipment. It is a consummation devoutly to be wished!

If I may state a personal and very unreliable feeling-reaction to *The Taming of the Nations*, I would say that it seems to me that Professor Northrop is seeking to understand the other cultural areas in order that they may understand us, and that we may convince them of our way of life and of our intentions, without too much "taming" of ourselves.

Perhaps good supplementary reading to this book would be Niebuhr's *The Irony of American History* and Toynbee's *The World and the West*. The former would suggest a radical surgery to recover the meaning of American civilization; and the latter would give a type of pragmatic recognition that perhaps we are not, after all, in such watertight compartments, but there can be mutual accommodation to the point of a great deal of culture-modification on our own part.

The construction of the larger synthesis on the basis of which the nations of the world may come together in mutual understanding will be long in coming to its perfection; it will depend on increasing accuracy of sociological and historical data, and on soundness of interpretation. As pioneer in this field, we recognize, with gratitude, the work of Professor Northrop.

There is ample material in the implications of *The Taming of the Nations* to suggest that someone write a parallel volume for the ecumenical Christian movements toward the formulation of international ecclesiastical policy—but that is another story.

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Understanding Europe. By CHRISTOPHER DAWSON. New York: Sheed & Ward, 1952. ix-261 pp. \$3.50.

To deal successfully with a vast subject in a brief compass is the prerogative of the erudite and the wise. The past history and present prospects of European civilization constitute a theme on the grand scale, and readers of this book will feel that Mr. Dawson commands, in usual measure, precisely the qualities which his task demands. His immense learning, which is fortified by the wisdom which comes from much reflection on important themes, makes him at home in every century of Western history and yet enables him constantly to distinguish between the incidentals

and the essentials of the past. If *Understanding Europe* were merely an essay in historical interpretation, the combination of theme and author would promise much; but what Mr. Dawson has actually given us is a tract for the times. It is much more than a study of cultural history; it is an assessment of a critical situation and the prescription of the only possible cure.

The perilous condition of Western civilization is not open to question, but many who are uneasy about the symptoms are unable to isolate the causes of our problem. The emergence of totalitarian governments and the growth of the mass state confront us with forces which challenge many of our easily accepted assumptions, and threaten the basic liberties that we prize. The material and technical revolution of recent times has altered the pattern of human life without producing any corresponding change in human nature. The influences which work for uniformity and standardization tend to dwarf the individual and make him the instrument of the collective forces on which his life increasingly depends. With something of a shock, our generation has awakened to the fact that "liberty and scientific efficiency are not necessarily united." In unfolding the significance of this fact, the great authoritarian regimes of Eastern Europe have played a decisive role, but these types of government are not a development without roots in the past. With great insight Mr. Dawson shows how the military empires of Prussia and Russia first developed the art of reducing human individuality to the level of a basic mass response. Frederick the Great and his drill sergeants evolved this technique for immediate ends, but it had the most far-reaching consequences.

Moreover, in the realm of ideas as well as the sphere of power politics, the totalitarian pattern has been gradually fashioned over a long period. Out of the ferment of forces characteristic of the Revolutionary era came, by absorption and reaction, Hegel's characteristic philosophical doctrines, and for a century their influence has been part of the very stuff of Eastern European life. They have been challenged in some quarters and modified in others, but no one can understand the pattern of political life today unless he appreciates the impact on the thought of yesterday of Hegel, Marx, and Nietzsche.

The importance of the cold war lies in the fact that it is a clash of traditions. Over against the type of life which has risen in Eastern Europe one must set the attitudes and outlook which have been characteristic of Western Europe. Freedom and the development of the individual stand opposed to authority and the regulation of the masses. That humanitarian strain which runs back to Hellas, but which has been enriched and modified by so many centuries of Christian experience, has issued in a type of civilization in which national differences are gathered together in a whole which is richly diversified yet fundamentally one. In this process distinct periods can be isolated, and each has been marked by its own characteristic contribution; different national traditions emerge, yet are subsumed under the pattern of the cultural whole. Moreover, this development by which the Western European nations have placed their mark so decisively on the history of mankind cannot be understood by restricting ourselves merely to that "geographical expression" which is Europe itself. By reaction, Eastern Europe and the lands of Asia and Africa; by assimilation and development, the new world of America and the nations of the British Commonwealth, have made the impact of European civilization world-wide and decisive.

It is in this sweeping survey of the past forces which have created the pattern of our present world that Mr. Dawson's peculiar excellence as a writer lies. His learning never obtrudes, and the facts which he can marshal are always carefully

subordinated to the principles which he expounds. On page after page the reader is delighted and stimulated as the author directs the searchlight of his penetrating insight upon events long familiar but only partially understood. At particular points Mr. Dawson may fail to carry conviction; certain judgments might be challenged or certain inferences criticized, but these are mere details. The essential fact is that a man, humane in spirit and wise in the ways of the past, is unfolding before us the inner significance of the development which has brought us to our present precarious position.

Yet it cannot be emphasized too strongly that Mr. Dawson is using the lessons of history as a guide for living men. It is important to understand the development of Western civilization because otherwise we cannot hope to save it from collapse. And Mr. Dawson has no doubt that civilization cannot be understood if we ignore the spiritual forces which have shaped it. "In the last resort every civilization is built on a religious foundation: it is the expression in social institutions and cultural activity of a faith or a vision of reality which gives the civilization its spiritual unity" (p. 231). The disasters which have overtaken us are due, in part at least, to our failure to appreciate this basic fact. Because we misunderstand our heritage we are incapable of using its vast and regenerative forces. So we face at once the problems of a technical age and the challenge of the totalitarian society, and our chances of survival depend on our power to reclaim the sources of spiritual power which are ours.

"The continued existence of European civilization depends on whether the Western people are capable of dealing seriously and realistically with this fundamental issue" (p. 239).

In this process, education must play an important part. Both at the beginning of the book and at the end Mr. Dawson has some penetrating criticisms of our failure to teach the young the true character of their wider cultural heritage—of our tendency to concentrate on national and political events while we ignore cultural and religious developments. But the basic question is the recovery of faith, since faith "is the beginning and end of Christian culture." "Therefore it is only by the rediscovery of the spiritual world and the restoration of man's spiritual capacities that it is possible to save humanity from self-destruction" (p. 253). Once again we must learn to take account of those imponderables which modern secular society so persistently ignores: the future, the human soul, and God.

Mr. Dawson is not discussing local problems, nor the difficulties which confront European people alone. We are all involved; all who share in Western civilization face a time in which the future of the race will be decided. But we can look forward with some measure of hope. We have vast spiritual resources as well as great technical skills. Of those resources this book, so urbane in outlook, so wise in counsel, so firm in conviction, is itself a symbol.

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The Courage to Be. By PAUL TILLICH. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952. ix-197 pp. \$3.00.

Philosophical anthropology is a reflection of man on himself and his meaning. Man himself is the subject of man's investigation. Only recently has the anthropological problem fully matured and been treated as a philosophical issue.

In *The Courage to Be*, a Terry Lecture at Yale, Paul Tillich tackles the

problems of courage and anxiety as "ontological concepts." Western thought has produced two meanings of courage. Courage as a human act, says Tillich, is an ethical concept. Courage as essential self-affirmation of one's being is an ontological concept. In his historical sketch of philosophical anthropology Tillich discusses the "ontology of anxiety" together with the "ontology of courage." Man's self-affirmation, so we are told, meets and conquers anxiety in the "courage to be."

Tillich distinguishes three main periods of anxiety in the Western world. They are, first, "the anxiety of fate and death"; second, "the anxiety of sin and condemnation"; and third, "the anxiety of emptiness and meaninglessness." He considers the latter the hallmark of our time, while the first and the second type are to be found foremost in the philosophy of the Stoics and in the religious thought of the Reformation respectively. The three types of anxiety are reflected in three corresponding types of courage. First, the "courage of participation," the courage of the Stoics. (Stoic courage presupposes the surrender of the personal center to the Logos of being, it is participation in the divine power of reason.) Second, the "courage of individualization," the courage of the Protestant Reformers; and third, the "courage of transcendence," the ultimate courage beyond which the courage to be cannot go.

The author analyzes the meaning of the courage to be in different societies. Not every reader will feel that his knowledge of the Middle Ages has been broadened after he has been told that "the courage of the Middle Ages as of every feudal society is basically the courage to be as a part" (p. 94). But there follow quite a few enlightening observations on modern collectivism and on significant American problems. To the people who have lost their traditional faiths and loyalties and thereby their "old collectivist self-affirmation," Communism gives in fact "a new collectivism and with it a new courage to be as a part" (p. 99). In America, "Conformity is growing, but it has not yet become collectivism." Like many other Europeans, Tillich is full of admiration for the resolve and the power of the typical American never to lose his courage, whatever disappointments may beset his way (p. 108).

In the Introduction to his book the author points out that he has chosen the concept of courage for an analysis of the human situation since theological, sociological, and philosophical problems converge around it. Consequently, he does not distinguish between the thought-forms of philosophical and theological anthropology. His analysis of the "Protestant courage of confidence" confronting the "anxiety of sin and condemnation" is not in any way basically different from his analysis of the "Stoic courage of participation." Stoicism and Neo-Stoicism, so we are told, are more than merely philosophical schools. In conquering the anxieties of fate and death they show "basic religious attitudes."

The term "religious attitude" as used by the author is somewhat confusing. Most higher religions have philosophical attitudes and most metaphysical systems have religious attitudes. There is, however, a distinct difference between a philosophical conviction on the one hand and a religious faith on the other as regards the attitude of either towards a concept such as salvation.

Philosophical anthropology is based on man's self-reflection. "Philosophical faith," the philosopher's ultimate concern, is based on the possibility of man's self-salvation. Theological anthropology, however, and especially Christian anthropology, sees man as God's creature. Man's destiny is seen as historical, man himself as a historical phenomenon, and man's relationship to God as existence in time. From the point of view of Christian anthropology man's salvation is never self-salvation.

It cannot be achieved through man's self-affirmation, but only through the power of grace; it is not the "courage to be" but the humility to accept.

Paul Tillich is professor of "Philosophical Theology." It may therefore not be surprising that he attempts to combine, but actually confounds, philosophy and theology. This applies both to his historical analysis and to the final credo of his last chapter, "Courage and Transcendence." In this chapter Tillich analyzes the concept of courage as the "self-affirmation of being in spite of the fact of nonbeing" . . . "Courage needs the power of being, a power transcending the nonbeing which is experienced in the anxiety of fate and death, which is present in the anxiety of emptiness and meaninglessness, which is effective in the anxiety of guilt and condemnation. The courage which takes this threefold anxiety into itself must be rooted in a power of being that is greater than the power of oneself and the power of one's world." Tillich's interpretation of the meaning of the "power of being" is more than paradoxical; it is ambiguous. Divine self-affirmation is supposedly the power that makes self-affirmation of the finite being possible. In a situation where "life is as meaningless as death" and "guilt as questionable as perfection," the meaning of life is reduced to despair. But, says Tillich, as long as this despair is an act of life it is positive in its negativity. It is possible for man to experience "the power of being" even in face of the most "radical manifestation of nonbeing."

Up to this point the analysis of radical self-affirmation in the face of absolute despair can be understood from the standpoint of philosophical anthropology. But when the author introduces the concept of "absolute faith" which is able to create radical self-affirmation, he speaks as a theologian who envisages an "existential situation," and whose point of view is then that of theological anthropology. Though Tillich does not "leap from doubt to *dogmatic certitude*" his solution of the problem of radical doubt is based on "faith" and on the "acceptance of despair." He is not speaking as in the preceding chapters in the "detached, objective attitude of the philosopher"; he has moved right into the "theological circle." Obviously, he has made what he calls "an existential decision." He has put himself in the "situation of faith."

Unfortunately he omits to point out one very significant fact, viz., that such faith as is able to accept the absence of all meaning is never human. Rather, it is divine. Wherever men have transcended "the abyss of meaninglessness" and death has been turned into life, they have experienced "grace" as the impossible possibility. Their answer has not been the courage of self-affirmation but the humility of acceptance: "Father, into Thy hands."

"For," to quote Karl Barth, "faith is the possibility which belongs to men in God, in God Himself and only in God, when all human possibilities have been exhausted."

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Religion in 20th Century America. By HERBERT W. SCHNEIDER. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1952. xii-244 pp. \$4.25.

This is the third volume of a series in American Civilization, sponsored by the Library of Congress, edited by Ralph Henry Gabriel, professor of history at Yale. Dr. Schneider is professor of philosophy and religion at Columbia.

The book is a sort of "reflective survey," to use the author's words. It is

not prepared in any of the standard modes of research and knowledge. Into slightly more than 200 pages of text are packed observations concerning numerous religious developments in the United States since 1900. Professor Schneider recognizes that many of the changes that he interprets have not been measured, and that indeed "most of them probably cannot be measured." Thus the writing "falls far short of a scientific report." "Generalizations must be hazarded, based on inadequate evidence, and values assigned based on personal impressions."

He opens with data and opinion concerning "the transformation of the Sabbath" in the first fifty years of the century. During the period there has been a constant diversification of religious institutions. Two new distinctly American religious bodies, the Latter-Day Saints and the Church of Christ, Scientist, have achieved large memberships and have become "extraordinarily stable." And the twentieth century has certainly had its movements. Some of these rise only to fall, others become well established. They are "forms of religious ferment." Lately, some of the promoters of movements readily point to religious institutions as the "foundation of American life." To these promoters Professor Schneider recommends a careful study of "how well various religious bodies actually provide 'the foundation of American life.'"

Relations of church and state, relatively ignored early in the century, came to new prominence, in the author's opinion, when Governor Alfred E. Smith became a candidate for the Presidency in 1928. In America, it seems, few churches would say that they are without social obligations. Thus the most vocal religious advocates of the separation of church and state advise the state day by day concerning what it should do! Actual relations between church and state can never be disposed of "on precise legal theory." They vary with "shifting of sympathies." There is much public discussion of the meaning of the first amendment, including the declaration of the Roman Catholic Bishops in 1948, in which they suggested a working formula for "cooperation of church and state . . . involving no special privilege to any group and no restriction on the religious liberty of any citizen." We do not want to separate religion from life in America. Nobody seems to want a strictly "hands-off" religion. Thus there are continuous and serious problems involved, because "neither state nor church can now be indifferent to each other's moral structure."

Dr. Schneider thinks that various trends have "made the Sunday school of less vital concern to a generation reared in modernized Sunday schools." He writes that while Christian missions have not brought the world to Christ, they "have brought Christianity to the world," and the missionaries "have contributed more than their share of the world's work." He remarks that in the realm of "missions" some of the most ironic and spectacular developments have taken place among Jews. Saying they have never believed in missions, they have engaged in one of the gigantic missions in history in their attempts to aid Palestine. Then when the State of Israel was established, the Israeli proceeded to carry out a mission to America, in short, "to Israelize all Judaism." Thus American and Israeli leaders now actually regard each other as reciprocal mission fields. A reading of this should at least be refreshing to plodding Christian officials.

With respect to incentives for the federation of Protestant churches, or the organization of the well-known church councils, Dr. Schneider comes to conclusions that will not be palatable to all the wheel horses of the movement. (It has been said that control of the ecumenical movement has gone out of the hands of the "ecumeniacs," or enthusiasts, to those of the wheel horses who draw up large budgets

and run large bureaus.) "The federation of churches is a compound of fear, courage, and work"—like all institutions, he also says. The Protestant churches he finds to be jealous of their majority status, and they cannot let a unified minority have an authoritative role in public affairs. There is also a rising opposition to Protestantism from secularism. If the Protestant churches were secure in their position, they might prefer not to present a common front; but in the face of opposition "they sense the practical need of drawing together." The Protestants are thus, according to Dr. Schneider, "both following and fighting the Roman Catholic model of ecclesiastical power."

To secularism there are numerous references. The author regards it as not "Godless." He thinks there is a good deal of piety among the forty-two per cent of the people not claimed for the church rolls. There is such a thing as unorganized religion in America. He quotes Meyer Shapiro in the *Partisan Review*: "Religion now has its fellow-travelers." And reviewing events since William James published his famous lectures, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, Dr. Schneider thinks much can be understood if sufficient accent is placed on the "varieties."

There are few notes taken on rural America, but it might have been claimed with much justification that religious institutions are generally, among other things, being urbanized.

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Religion and the Decline of Capitalism. By V. A. DEMANT. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952. 204 pp. \$3.00.

The Holland Lectures for 1949, contained in this book, are the latest of a series initiated in March, 1922, by R. H. Tawney. Tawney's work was published as *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*. It is in relation to that epochal book that Demant's discussion is best understood. Tawney dealt with problems which had been raised by Max Weber in his famous essays, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Ernest Troeltsch discussed the question thoroughly in *The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches*. There is now a whole literature on this issue. That literature deals primarily with the relationships which obtain between the emergence of Capitalism in the Western World and the various forms of Protestantism. Demant's work is predicated on the assumption that we have now come to an end of an era.

The thesis of the book is found in the conception of "the great reversal." He holds that the decline of Capitalism is to be regarded not so much as the beginning of a new order of history but as the end of a short-lived experiment. In order to understand the meaning of this idea it is well to think of Capitalism as the emergence of economic autonomy in Western culture, and of the great reversal as the return of the economic order into the larger context of culture on a non-autonomous basis. Out of this phenomenon a number of interesting questions emerge. These questions provide the basis of discussion of the present volume.

Capitalism, according to Demant, was not a simple matter but included at least three things: a form of economic organization, the mainspring of a certain kind of culture, and an outlook on the relation of the material universe to human existence. These three aspects of Capitalism must be distinguished for the reason that they did not arise simultaneously and their relative declines do not occur together. Though the

nerve of Capitalism is the predominance of market relationships over the greater part of the social field, it is necessary to keep the other aspects of the situation in mind if we are to understand the role which Religion is called on to play as Capitalism retreats from its regnant position as market autonomy and becomes again an aspect of larger political and social forces. For a long time we have been accustomed to the view that the so-called "eternal" or "natural" laws of classical economics which assumed free trade and free competition were valid only under certain social and political conditions.

The question naturally arises whether economic liberalism can go down without losing "firstly, the advantages of disinterested science and serviceable techniques, and secondly, such positive aspects of the liberal tradition as the rule of law and insistence upon the priority of persons over institutions." Even in the days of the relative autonomy of the market place, the economic freedom of Capitalism was possible so long as it did not occupy the whole field. Its defenders were not aware of the fact that it rested on foundations which were themselves not the products of that economic autonomy. Nevertheless, Capitalism has greatly modified or radically changed these fundamental presuppositions so that in the period ahead economic life can never be a simple return, even if man should seek it, to the cultural situation preceding the rise of Capitalism.

Demant suggests four main reasons for the decline of Capitalism: "the hostility it has brought on against itself; the break-up of its own institutional framework; its parasitism on the non-economic foundations of society; and the dissipation of the dispositions which reared and sustained it." This brings us to one of the main theses of the book, namely, that what the decline of Capitalism is making for is not what the rise of Capitalism made away from.

Many persons see in the period of the decline of Capitalism the simple rise of State power or what might be called the State principle. This constitutes a complex phenomenon. It raises on the one hand the question of the relationship of the political order to the economic order as such and it raises the question of the State to the Community as a whole. Secular idealists and influential churchmen tended to view "the State principle" as the factor which would restore the social bonds that had been weakened or destroyed by the dominance of market economics. Demant is eager to show that the State is not the community and cannot substitute for the innumerable vital relationships that make up the bonds of society. Indeed both capitalist and collectivist economies are victims of the same social diseases such as commodity hedonism, reckless dissipation of man's estate, the impulse to overestimate technology at the expense of the biological, community, and spiritual substance of society, arrogance of industrial nations toward the rest of the world, rationalism of enterprise, and "the same perfectionism which believed that now at last human life had found in organization the solution of its inner conflicts." Demant throws out the challenge to Religion and to society as a whole to rediscover the proper foundations of social life which are found in a communitarian understanding of man's relation to his fellow men and to God. He does not in principle reject the socialist state, but he does call upon modern society to re-establish through vital cultural and religious sources the proper rootage of human existence. Taken by itself "collectivism is but atomism packed tight." Religion is called to help man understand the work of God, man's own nature, needs, powers, and limitations, so that the development of society will not be attempted as an artificial construction but as grounded in what is ultimately real.

While Demant's individual theses are not new, they have at least the merit of providing a brilliant synopsis of the challenge confronting Christianity as it charts its way in the midst of declining Capitalism and threatening Statism.

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Jesus Christ and His Cross. By F. W. DILLISTONE. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1953. 143 pp. \$2.50.

Dr. Dillistone, who is well known not only to the readers of this Journal but to countless ministers, students, and theologians on both sides of the Atlantic, has favored us with another monograph on the meaning of the Cross. His keen interest in the subject has led him to reconsider the problem from a different point of view. By combining theology and sound scholarship with Christian devotion, the author has made it possible for the ordinary man on the street to understand the great doctrine of the Atonement. Dr. Dillistone and the Westminster Press are to be congratulated on the publication of this invaluable book.

Modern writers, notably Susanne K. Langer and Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, are beginning to pay more attention to the meaning of the Cross in ordinary day-to-day existence. Human existence itself, they say, is cruciform. That is, whether modern man admits it or not, the fact is that his existence is permeated by a cross. The church is thus faced with the tremendous problem of presenting the Cross of Jesus Christ in such a way as to make it a *unique* event in the history of mankind, which must not be confused with the cross of human existence.

Right throughout the centuries this confusion of identity has led to different views of the Cross. There is for instance the so-called realistic approach. This view takes the position that the Cross of Jesus Christ is the extreme illustration of the essential contradictions inherent in human existence, and in effect says that the Cross points to the folly and sin of man. If the Cross is merely the epitome of human sin, then how can this Cross redeem man from sin? There is another extreme position which may be termed the idealistic approach. Here the Cross of Christ is viewed as the supreme illustration of the victory of life over death, good over evil, disregarding the actual suffering and death of Jesus Christ upon the Cross.

Both positions fail to give us a true picture of the meaning and relevance of the Cross for modern man. To bridge the gap between these two extreme positions, the author undertakes to treat the problem from the actual life and career of Jesus Christ as set forth in the New Testament.

The problem is considered in the ensuing chapters with ample Scriptural references and illustrations from modern literature. The various appellations applied to Jesus give us the clue to the *real* meaning of the Cross. There is for instance a reference to Jesus in Acts 5:31 designating him as "Leader and Savior." He is thus the Hero in the sense that he fully accepted the conditions of the human struggle, thereby leading his followers to salvation. Another significant designation is that of Shepherd. This term does not convey to modern man the same meaning as it did to the man in the Orient, where it meant personal care even at the risk of his own life. Since he is the Shepherd the people are the sheep. They are like sheep who have gone astray (Isa. 53). Here the writer makes the following comment: "Here is a picture of man not so much in his rebellion and perverseness as in his pathetic weakness and fecklessness" (p. 37). Surely, this is not the full description

of sinful man! The biblical view of sin is that it is willful rebellion against God, and not mere weakness.

The reason why Jesus was and is able to save man from sin is that he identified himself with sinful man and was obedient to God. These two principles make the Cross not the epitome of human folly, but the way to redemption.

The best treatment of the problem of Christ's *Kenosis* is to be found in the chapter on "The Servant of the Lord." Here the author is on solid ground. Here the real significance of the Cross is brought out more clearly than in the chapter on "The High Priest," where the sacrificial element is stressed.

The book is thoroughly Scriptural, written in a simple, lucid style, and should appeal to theologian and layman alike.

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P. T. Forsyth: The Man and His Work. By W. L. BRADLEY. Chicago: Alec R. Allenson, 1952. 284 pp. \$3.50.

P. T. Forsyth: Prophet for Today. By ROBERT McAFFEE BROWN. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1952. 192 pp. \$3.50.

Dr. Peter Taylor Forsyth died November 11, 1921. For over twenty years he had been Principal of Hackney Theological College, Hampstead, London. In 1905 he had been chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales. At the time of his death he was easily the outstanding master of theological dialectic in the English-speaking world. Those of us who listened to his lectures in Hackney College will never forget their coruscating brilliancy. He was a master of the cutting phrase which hid a profound insight under a seeming contradiction. His intellectual sword flashed like lightning. But after the storm you always heard the still small voice. He had broken with the superficial liberalism of his time and was always calling for deeper thoughts about God and man and sin and salvation. In a way it was all summed up in his own startling phrase, "the cruciality of the cross." After his death it seemed that he might go the way of all flesh and be completely forgotten or remembered only as a name. Then there came the amazing revival of interest in the processes of his thought. Volume after volume was republished. It seemed clear that he would take his place as a permanent influence in British religious thought.

And now two books about him have been published. Significantly enough, both are by Americans. Dr. Bradley worked in the main in Scotland. Dr. Brown did much of his work in England. Both are glad to recognize the help of that gifted lady, Mrs. Jessie Forsyth Andrews, the daughter of Dr. Forsyth. Those who followed the intellectual movements of the period of Forsyth from within will recognize in each volume some of the qualities of the friendly, industrious, and competent outsider. The larger of the two books is written by Dr. Bradley and we are indebted to him for significant material regarding Forsyth's early ministry. But Dr. Brown's book loses nothing in careful and discriminating thought from being brief. The two volumes really supplement each other. And it is very necessary that the student should go on from them to experience the fairly devastating brilliancy of Forsyth's own books.

In these volumes you see Forsyth move from the position of an able advocate of the particular brand of liberalism which was dominant during his earlier ministry to a position dominated by the deepest moral and spiritual insights of evangelical

religion. Forsyth had a profound distaste for the shoddy and the superficial, and his ironic analysis is often characterized by almost overwhelming power. But it is the positive movement of his mind which is most impressive. You might call his writing a setting forth in theological form of the deepest insights and experiences of *Pilgrim's Progress*. Forsyth was profoundly influenced both by Hegel and by Ritschl. In many ways what he received from them was good; but perhaps there was something of loss as well as gain. Forsyth himself deeply emphasized the personal. He never forgot that the Christian religion is a matter of the living God and living men. But the turn for abstraction which he received from Hegel prevented his seeing all the implications of this emphasis. And in his very deepest thinking he moved away from rather than in the direction of Ritschl.

It may be that those who look with deep sympathy upon the new orthodoxy are a little too much inclined to go to Forsyth for confirmation of positions which they have received from other sources. It is significant that the readers of the present volumes scarcely see the importance of the aspect of the thought of Forsyth represented by his book *Christ on Parnassus*. Indeed if Dr. Forsyth were alive today I suspect that he might turn from some aspects of the new orthodoxy as decisively as he turned from some aspects of the old liberalism.

In any event we are indebted to Dr. Bradley and Dr. Brown for good work well done. And if those of us who knew Dr. Forsyth and talked with him intimately miss something in his personality which gave him a kind of magnificence, we must not blame the authors of these two books for that. One likes to think of the sound and dependable work which Dr. Bradley is doing in the Hartford Theological Seminary. And one likes to think of the incisive mind and the utter sincerity which Dr. Brown will bring to his old school in New York, when he returns to Union Theological Seminary.

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The Presence of the Kingdom. By JACQUES ELLUL. Translated by OLIVE WYON. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1952. 153 pp. \$2.50.

In the Orthodox Churches the phenomenon of the lay theologian has been pronounced (witness Berdyaev in the recent generation). In the Roman Church it has been occasional (witness Maritain, still prolific). In the Protestant churches of our time we have had no especially forceful example of the lay theologian, although there is one example of a prominent American interpreter of Christian ethics who evidently forsook ordination in order to get closer to the university students without seeming to be a professional apologist.

Jacques Ellul is a French layman, nurtured in the University tradition of his country. He took a degree in theology, but has devoted his academic life to the teaching of jurisprudence in Strasbourg and Bordeaux. His has been no cloistered life, however, for he served with the resistance movement in France, 1941-1944, and was assistant to the Mayor of Bordeaux for a space.

This lay theologian speaks with enormous power. What he says will fall strangely on many American liberal ears. It is to be hoped, however, that he will not be rejected merely as neo-orthodox or existentialist (labels he would doubtless eschew), for he has given us a penetrating analysis of man's present situation which speaks a word we need to ponder. At first encounter this small book (even in its

size) reminds one of Elton Trueblood's *Alternative to Futility*. But many will feel that M. Ellul has penetrated more deeply into the paradoxical aspects of contemporary existence.

The Christian in the world has a different function to discharge, this author affirms, from that of the "natural" man. Indeed, his mission is one of which the natural man has no inkling, "yet in reality this mission is decisive for the actions of men." What is this function? "To be a sign." The Christian is not called upon to initiate benevolent movements, or to establish patterns for social reform, or to remake the world. He is to be a witness. The Scriptural basis for this is indicated by three commands: you are the salt of the earth, you are the light of the world, you are to go forth as sheep in the midst of wolves.

The Christian does not become separated from the world. "The illusion of a Christian life attached to a convent or a hermitage has vanished," Ellul says—contrary to Merton's experiences under "the sign of Jonas"! On the other hand, the Christian is not called upon to become an activist identified so utterly with the life of the world that he takes on the coloration of the world. The task, rather, is to bear within one's life that to which the grace of God has summoned one, by which alone one can truly live—and with that as one's reality to live in the actual world with all its contradictions and discomfitures and frustrations. This will lead one into revolutionary social action, but always as a Christian.

By this M. Ellul does not mean "living according to principle." He manifests an existential position in denying that there are such things as "Christian principles." Rather, the Christian judges, acts, and lives according to the *eschaton*, lived here and now. On the individual plane this is "the very opposite of an ethic." This is equally true as regards the political and social spheres. "What God reveals to us in this sphere by the Scriptures is not a doctrine or principles—it is judgment and action, wholly directed towards the accomplishment of the work of God." Each moment is apocalyptic. For God's Kingdom is present.

The author renders a profound analysis of the contradictory nature of our present existence. He always deals with the actual situation and not with abstractions, pointing out that man has not only confused ends and means, but has abandoned any end. "Man has set out at tremendous speed—to go nowhere."

The chapter entitled "The Problem of Communication" is an argument for the necessity to penetrate beyond the "shadows" and "explanatory myths" by which we all live into a rediscovery of the duty of awareness, both of ourselves and of our real neighbors. The Christian must apprehend his neighbor *where he is*, for the neighbor is in the same contradictions of the world as the Christian himself, save that the latter witnesses to the saving event of God in Christ which makes the Kingdom a present fact. The final chapter, delightfully labeled "Prologue and Conclusion," urges that contemporary Christians seek a "style of life" commensurate with their calling, one which will have a distinctive quality capable of showing forth the witness in a gracious and winning way. Instead, the church has usually merely been reflecting the style of life of modern man as a whole.

Essentially a treatise in Christian ethics, this book verges always on the deeper questions of theology. The author takes pains every now and then to say, in effect, "We must not go farther into this, for that is the task of theology." One hopes that he will follow this with a fuller treatment, not hesitating to go farther. There is power in this man's writing which patently comes from a lived faith. We must have more from his mind and heart.

One final comment needs to be made—a word of appreciation to the trans-

lator, Olive Wyon. This amazing linguist has done theology a service beyond measure, by taking difficult German and French texts and transmuting them into fluent and engaging English pages. Certainly she has helped bring the Continent not only to England, but to the United States! That we need such approaches, both ways, who would deny?

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Criticism and Faith. By JOHN KNOX. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1952. 128 pp. \$1.75.

This is an interesting and valuable little book, but "little" only with reference to its size, as the 114 pages of text indicate. It is concerned with a pertinent problem, the role of biblical scholarship in the common life of the church. Biblical scholarship has reached a state of maturity which prompts the serious-minded to wonder what it has contributed to the faith. Can biblical scholarship seriously harm, or can it materially aid, the practice of our faith? These are questions of real import, to which the Baldwin Professor of Sacred Literature at Union Theological Seminary in New York City here addresses himself.

The first chapter deals with the issue of whether or not historical criticism has actually been accepted by the church. It is shown here that the Christian faith does not rest primarily on the historian's judgments, and that history itself is of vital importance for the Christian religion. Just as Christianity sprang out of a historical event, the coming of Jesus into the human sphere of existence, so the biblical books emerged from the historical experience of the religious community that is the Christian church. The essential usefulness of the Bible for the Christian community made the two more or less inseparable, so that it would be very difficult, if not virtually impossible, for the church to continue indefinitely without her main pillar, the Bible. For "one cannot read this literature without recognizing that the community whose life it reflects stands in the immediate glow of a great event."

"The Security of Faith" is the title of the second chapter. The "event" is actually an act of God realized in history, remembered and interpreted through the religious experience of the Christian community. Jesus was this event, and his human career was fixed in history as the focal point around which the church developed into reality. The "historicity of Jesus" has sometimes been a rather troublesome phrase, but it seems to take on new meaning in the light of the author's discussion.

According to the next chapter, "The Meaning of Faith," we have become accustomed to making distinctions in biblical materials, as to degrees of value and kinds of certainty on which much of our religious experience rests. The older fundamentalism, even in conservative quarters, is not so important as formerly. Perhaps historical criticism might as well claim some credit as these values have become more widely disseminated. And the same distinctions in quality of content are of greater significance today, because strictly historical biblical events have been confirmed in the continuing life and religious experience of the Christian community.

The relations between the event and the community are held to be valid throughout this study, and rightly so, as in the chapter on "The Authority of the New Testament." Since this is primarily the church's book, it might also be thought to be her one and only foundation, but that is not the whole story. The church's one foundation is Jesus, a historical person from whose earthly career came the Christ of faith. And even in ancient Israel the beginning of the church might be seen, though its full

manifestation was not realized until the earthly Jesus had become the risen Christ, or until the event is more fully known in the Kingdom of God.

The authority of the Christian, then, is the authority of the event, and our knowledge of it depends on the experience of the primitive Christian community that brought it into being. The real relation of the Bible to this community is to be seen just here, as it gives us the only record of the event by which the community came into existence. Historical criticism thus is the study of the record, and its aim is to establish the grounds of the Christian community more firmly in our minds.

The chapter on "Creative Interpretation" raises a crucial question: what is the real value of the historian's work? It is granted that Christianity is a historical religion, and repeatedly affirmed that the revelation of God in Christ was God's action in and through a historical event. Four values are then described as paramount in importance: (1) The application of historical method to biblical study is essential for the establishment of the event in its actual setting. (2) The historical method aids in the recovery of the event by helping distinguish the various stages of its development and the forces that created it. (3) The event is thus rooted more firmly in history as the processes of investigation turn up the data and throw light on them. Some supposed facts of biblical history have been disproved, but many others have been more fully validated as a result of the historian's work. (4) The church also understands better the reality of the event that is the foundation of her being. Extra-biblical source materials even make their contribution to the process with their findings, and we have a richer Bible and a deeper sense of trust in the historian's work.

The final chapter deals with "Historical Criticism and Preaching." The author here comes to the practical application of his theme for the work of the preacher. He holds that both the biblical historian and the preacher are interpreters of the Bible; both teachers by profession, in the same subject area, and largely to the same pupils. This theme is dealt with at length, with clarity of thought and firm conviction, and is well illustrated from biblical materials. Some common misconceptions are cleared and the more positive values in the materials and usage is emphasized.

It would be difficult to think of a more fitting conclusion to the entire argument, or to this review, than the author's final words: "The preacher and the critic, the preacher of the gospel and the critic of the gospels—they belong together and they need each other! The preacher no less than the scholar is concerned with the gospels; the scholar no less than the preacher is concerned with the gospel. What is most important and most certainly true for the one is such also for the other. For both are devoted to the recovery and interpretation of the event of which the gospels (and indeed the entire New Testament) are the earliest record and the gospel is the continuing proclamation."

CHARLES F. NESBITT

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The Origin and Development of Early Christian Church Architecture.

By J. G. DAVIES. New York: The Philosophical Library, 1953. xiii-152 pp.
\$4.75.

The author of this volume has sound scholarly reasons for surveying geographical and historical backgrounds before undertaking his investigation of architectural origins. To a greater or less degree the materials and forms of architecture are conditioned or even determined by geographical situations. Thanks chiefly to pre-eminent church historians ancient and modern—Eusebius and Harnack particularly—a great abun-

dance of informative data from all around the Mediterranean Sea is available for illustrating the historical and geographical expansion of early Christianity. The course of this expansion as represented by Davies follows in the main the sequence organized by Adolph Harnack in his classic *Mission and Ausbreitung*. There are, however, regrettable omissions and neglects in the Davies representation. Most slighted are the very important Greek areas extending between the New Rome of the East, Constantinople on the Bosphorus, and the ancient Rome of the West on the River Tiber. Also the great islands in the Mediterranean are ignored altogether. Furthermore the mainland surveys are marred by mislocations and misspellings here and there.

Four pages on "Churches Before Constantine" are among the most disappointing sections in this volume. Mainly this is because the author has apparently missed completely the social and religious-architectural import of ambitious types of church buildings that intervened between the earliest house churches in Christian use and the monumental Constantinian basilicas. Varieties of Christian community halls were becoming more and more impressive in the immediately pre-Constantine period. Prime scholars in the field, such as Kenneth Conant and Richard Krautheimer, are tireless in calling attention to their importance.

In discussing basilican origins the author canvasses some half-dozen interesting possibilities of structural prototypes ranging from the *schola*, like the familiar "lecture-hall of Tyrannus" (Acts 19:9), to the unavoidable Roman civil basilica of imperial times. The list reviewed is typical and significant, but scarcely comprehensive. In each case the author seems more interested to demonstrate that the type in question was not the singular and inclusive origin of the Christian basilica, than he is to indicate what more limited influence, possible or probable, it may have contributed to the new constructive synthesis being devised by Christian builders for their own use. In one case the author's rebuttal of excessive claims is fresh and timely. That is in his discussion of the hyspaethron, or unroofed rectangular funeral building, in relation to the Christian basilica. Surely in this instance the genetic process is not comprehended within the framework of the hyspaethron. What the inquiring mind misses most from this part of the author's study is the specific indication of the important ways in which Christian builders distinctly modified main features of the Roman civil basilica. The functional examination of that metamorphosis would tell us much concerning the chief phases of Christian community experience in the Constantinian era.

The inevitable companion piece to the author's discussion of basilican origins is his chapter, "The Central Type of [Church] Architecture." The different kinds of plans isolated for interrogation and explanation are minimal in number and variety: circular, polygonal, domed basilican, and cruciform. On the whole the particular sanctuaries cited as examples are competently chosen and excellently diagrammed or pictured.

The focal issue in this chapter is the vexatious problem of the genesis of the masonry pendentive as the main support for the masonry dome. When and where and by whom was this brilliant solution devised for the difficulty of supporting a circular dome on a square base? It must be admitted that the author's resurvey of this matter is less than satisfactory, mainly because he has apparently not recognized the importance of certain recent examinations of the issue. For the classic pro-Roman proposition that Roman architects did it all within the limits of Italy, the author's dependence is on the indecisive work of Rivoira from nearly five decades ago, not on the exacting work of Emerson Swift and Baldwin Smith in our mid-century.

The author's treatment of church furnishings, and of outlying buildings adjoining the church proper, is characterized by a closely synthetic utilization of the two different sorts of primary data on which the historian is mainly dependent: the monumental materials and the literary records. The dependence of Davies is about equal on both these kinds of data, and his facility in utilizing each is approximately even with his employment of the other.

True to the commitment in his book title ("The Origin"), the author gives special attention to the immediate and direct antecedents, Gentile or Jewish, for the Christian items under examination. This line of inquiry could easily be carried much farther backward to more remote and ultimate archetypes. Here and there, also, the author gives vivid demonstration of the controlling influence of the Christian liturgy on both the furnishings and plans of early churches. Undoubtedly this direction of study will be carried much farther forward in the future, and it will be given ever wider application as we learn more and more about the elaboration of early Christian liturgy.

Incidentally, it is most refreshing to read in this manual the author's frank and clear affirmation that the predominance of archeological evidence plainly specifies that affusion was the normal early Christian method for handling the rite of baptism. Early baptistries were so shallow that the rite could not have been conducted impressively in them in any other way. With this observation agrees the representational evidence from early Christian frescoes in catacombs and elsewhere.

The most fascinating and convenient chapter in the book is the final chapter on "The Geographical Distribution." Here the author returns to and reiterates the sound perspective with which he initiated his inquiry. Thus he concentrates on the environing conditions, material and cultural, that guided or influenced architectonic developments, and also on the resultant expressionism in style and construction. In contrast to the fairly simple dichotomy of central vs. basilican, that has limited previous chapters in subject matter, the record here suddenly becomes embarrassingly multi-form and complex and divergent. The architectural predominance of a very few major types and patterns of Constantinian Christendom did not ruthlessly liquidate local and provincial distinctiveness and creativity and assertiveness in church building. On the contrary, local predilections and even idiosyncrasies burgeoned and flourished in unrestrained varieties thereafter.

The author's record of all this is quite terse and constricted. Actually he has confined it to some thirty pages of type. Appropriately he himself characterizes it as merely a "cursory survey." It is reasonable to anticipate that this section of his investigation will have very extensive and detailed expansion in the future as excavations continue productively in early Christian areas.

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Man's Search for Himself. By ROLLO MAY. New York: W. W. Norton, 1952.
281 pp. \$3.50.

I want to recommend this book heartily, not alone for what it says but also for what it does not say; not only for the answers it gives but also for the questions and the spirit of inquiry it raises in the reader's mind; not because it is the last word but because it is a dynamic challenge for further research into the nature of man.

The book is scholarly and yet it is warm. It charmed and intrigued me. I could

not put it down until I had read it through, and I shall return to it many times, for it told me quite a bit about myself.

I was impressed to see how consistently Dr. May seeks to point out the ways by which the individual could be saved from resorting to the use of crutches and escapes. He is truly devoted to the possibility of the achievement of freedom by the individual: "Freedom is man's capacity to take a hand in his own development. It is our capacity to mold ourselves. . . . Consciousness of self gives us the power to stand outside the rigid chain of stimulus and response, to pause, and by this pause to throw some weight on either side, to cast some decisions about what the response will be."

In Part I, entitled "Our Predicament," the author deals with the loneliness and anxiety of modern man. He points to the basic roots of our malady: the loss of the center of values in our society, the loss of the sense of self, the loss of our language for personal communication, the loss of our sense of nature, and the loss of a sense of tragedy.

Part II is entitled "Rediscovering Selfhood." Here the author discusses the experience of becoming a person, dealing with the consciousness of self, the unique mark of man. He finds self-contempt a substitute for self-worth, consciousness of self, and the capacity to experience one's body and feelings. Then he moves to the "struggle to be," and here he deals with cutting the umbilical cord, the struggle against one's own dependency, and stages in the growth of consciousness of self.

In Part III, "The Goals of Integration," he moves into a discussion of freedom and inner strength, the creative conscience, courage, the virtue of maturity. He builds the thesis that man is the transcender of time, though at this point the author is afraid to let his reason become courageous.

In my opinion, the book would have been strengthened if the author had faced more fundamentally who the person is. Is he a cosmic accident or is he the child of a creative process? Several times the author moves to a recognition of God and of the divine nature, but only through quotations. Does Dr. May—and I am aware of his background—really believe in prayer, and in God, and in man as a part of something greater than himself?

I have a feeling that the author is not saying all that he feels. In this respect he may be a good therapist, but he may, by this very act, miss wholeness of thinking. While the book is challenging and fresh, there is something lacking. Such an approach will provide a start for a person's search for himself, but it will be but a partial guide; it will not help the person come to the fullest integration or to the fullest realization of the self.

Let me refer to a situation with which I have been familiar, which is one of many, to illustrate this point.

Here is a young woman who was referred to a minister by a psychiatrist who felt that she had come to the point where she needed the resources of religion. After listening to her summarize her experiences, the minister sensed that she was simply going around in circles. Finally he asked her if she would like to talk it all over with God. After hesitating at first, she agreed to try, though she said that God had never been very real to her. As she prayed for freedom from the dependence she had always felt toward her parents and which she had transferred to her husband, she found that that freedom was hers. She became calm, and as she rose to leave her face was radiant: "I don't understand it, but for the first time in my life I feel like a woman, like a wife, like a mother." Obviously she needed all of the insight she had won

through the analytic experience, but she also needed the revelation and the work of grace that was hers in that prayer experience.

This reviewer has had that experience again and again as he has worked with people as a counselor, or in collaboration with persons who have been working with a psychiatrist.

This aspect is only hinted at in Dr. May's book, and we can well wonder whether he said all that he really felt. He has presented the insights of psychiatry in a remarkable way, and he did move beyond; if he had moved a little further—and I feel that he could have done so without losing face with the analysts—then the book would have represented greater wholeness.

However, as we have said, this book has greatness and newness and it should be read by all those who are interested in the next step in man's development.

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Rehearsals of Discomposure. By NATHAN A. SCOTT, JR. New York: King's Crown Press (Columbia University), 1952. xv-294 pp. \$4.00.

The subtitle of this study is "Alienation and Reconciliation in Modern Literature: Franz Kafka, Ignazio Silone, D. H. Lawrence, T. S. Eliot." The choice of the last three of these for a study of this kind is less obvious than that of Kafka, who has become the prototype of spiritual and social unrest and alienation in modern literature. But the author succeeds in analyzing all of his chosen subjects as artists whose work reflects the estrangement of modern man from the sources of religious consolation and produces social excommunication or "self-encystment" as apprehended in the sexual bias of Lawrence. They are thus spiritual historians of our age, focused on the tragic severance of the human relation and of man's relation to the mystery of being. The anguish of their solitude and "individual boundedness" has led them to a deeper conception of our religious situation if not to the affirmation of the Christian way of surrender to the cross.

Kafka's inability to rebel and his unwillingness to submit may be regarded as the key traits of his personal psychology. His apprehension of God as the *mysterium tremendum* and its suggestion in *The Trial* and *The Castle* by dramatizing him as the numinous Being moves Kafka into the neighborhood of Kierkegaard. Yet he never became capable of the Danish existentialist's "leap into faith" that was his salvation.

Silone's concern is the revolutionary in his enforced temporary and perennial isolation. The range of his work is, however, not confined to psychological analyses of a revolutionary's solitude. The demand for Christian salvation must extend itself to physical and social situations; it must become Christ's Presence in the élan of love and friendship in every realm, a movement that includes the redemption of politics. Political acts must become acts of brotherhood and friendship in Christ.

The author defends D. H. Lawrence against the common conception that he was idealizing carnal desire. Scott believes that Lawrence suffered from a profound hatred of the sexual rhythms of the body. His glorification of sex was in reality an "impulse toward the glorious indistinction of the mystic Night wherein the particularizations of human existence, without which the sexual impulse is unthinkable, are transcended." His despair was the inability of achieving a "balanced polarity" for unity-in-division. It grew out of his tragic personal history and made him,

incidentally, also compose one of the most blasphemous pieces ever written about Jesus.

T. S. Eliot's emphasis on dogma rather than Christian enthusiasm makes him ultimately assume "the pre-eminence of the Church as God's agency for accomplishing man's redemption." His is an all-inclusive *metanoia*, a poetry of purgation. The doctrine of regeneration is one of profound cultural and political relevance. His earlier works describe our contemporary anguish, while in his later phases he wants us to accept and maintain our solitude as a discipline toward union, communion, and rehabilitation in God.

Nathan Scott's study is no invitation to a pleasant literary promenade affording a view upon the scene of human distress and ending in a general religious solution or the affirmation of Christ. His book is overloaded not only with quotations more or less pertaining to his subject, but also burdened with so many unruly invasions by multitudes of related topics that only the most patient concentration and frequent rereading of some of his marathon sentences can maintain in the reader a sense of sequence and order. Scott has an enormous wealth of references at his finger tips, but employs them so loosely that they smother his interesting thesis and rob it of the convincing persuasion that his enthusiasm might otherwise have produced. Many of his debates remain esoteric, and should have been rigidly pruned to give his study a solid foundation and that clarity of which especially such a study as his is in great need. One regrets that this stimulating writer did not have the benefit of the "usual editorial attention" of Columbia University Press that the Crown Press apparently denies its publications, as the imprint states. Scott's remarkable talent for pithy diagnosis and his encyclopedic reading will, we hope, undergo a self-imposed *askesis* that can only improve his future works. Much of his present book moves the literary, philosophical, and religious aspects of his four poets into focus and leads, at long last, away from a predominantly esthetic evaluation, although some of his emphases seem forced (especially in D. H. Lawrence). The book is, nevertheless, a remarkable contribution to the diagnosis of our spiritual crisis.

WILLIAM HUBBEN

Editor of *The Friend's Intelligencer*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Book Notices

Concise Bible Commentary. By W. K. LOWTHER CLARKE. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953. xii-996 pp. \$7.00.

This is the first complete new one-volume Bible commentary in two decades, and includes the Apocrypha. Dr. Clarke, of Jesus College, Cambridge University, for many years editorial secretary of the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, has devoted forty years to this work, keeping track of the advances of knowledge in the field by wide and judicious reading. By one-man authorship he has achieved conciseness and unity of treatment; on the other hand, he has shown his objectivity by occasionally suppressing his own conclusions in favor of those generally accepted. Besides the running commentary on the text and introduction to each book of the Bible, the volume contains twenty-eight articles on key subjects (Hebrew history, geography, archeology, text, versions and canon, life and teaching of Jesus, St. Paul's life and letters, life in the first Gentile churches, New Testament doctrine, the sacraments, miracles, the Bible view of history, etc.), also a glossary and outlines of lessons.

Theology Digest. Vol. 1, No. 1, Winter 1953. St. Mary's, Kansas: St. Mary's College (School of Divinity of St. Louis University). GERALD VAN ACKEREN, S.J., editor. 64-page Digest published Winter, Spring, and Autumn. \$2.00 per year; 75¢ per copy.

This new magazine is published for priests, religious, and laity, to keep them in touch with the large body of contemporary Catholic theological literature in various languages. The opening editorial points out that the present acute social and spiritual crisis of mankind has had as strong an impact on Catholic theologians as on Protestants, and "the great focal truth of the supernatural social unity of the Church, Christ's Mystical Body, has come to the foreground in Catholic thinking." "Catholic thought, very much alive today, is becoming increasingly aware of its vocation in today's world. . . . (Its) answer is Christ, Christ as He still lives in the Church."

Articles in the opening issue include treatments of the lay apostolate, the different senses of Scripture, the ends of marriage, problems of lay participation in the Mass ("should not genuine active participation be within the powers of all?"), the internal development of Protestantism (by a German scholar), the priesthood of the faithful. Protestants will find such a sampling of present Catholic thought both interesting and profitable reading.

Communism and Christ. By CHARLES LOWRY. New York: Morehouse-Gorham Co., 1952. xvi-176 pp. \$2.50.

A small but powerful book by a well-traveled and widely educated clergyman-scholar; acclaimed by leaders Protestant, Catholic, and secular as one of the best statements of the issues of the world conflict today. Addressed to the laity, it is necessarily terse and brief in its treatment of the many aspects of religious and cultural history that are touched upon. But its analysis of dialectical materialism in theory and practice, together with its presentation of the challenge of the Christian revelation to "the American Way" is designed to reach the minds of many with clarifying effect. Two editions came out in 1952.

Reinhold Niebuhr has said, "It has long been the custom of anti-Communist propaganda to describe it as 'atheism' and 'irreligion.' Actually, its danger derives from the fact that it is a powerful idolatrous religion. Why this is true and how this false religion is to be compared with Christianity, Dr. Lowry explains in this very illuminating volume."

A History of Unitarianism: in Transylvania, England and America. By EARL MORSE WILBUR. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1952. x-518 pp. \$7.50.

This is a "Volume II," complementing *A History of Unitarianism: Socinianism and Its Antecedents*, reviewed previously in RELIGION IN LIFE (Spring 1947). The present work traces Unitarianism as a religious, intellectual, and social movement from the middle of the sixteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth.

The Beginning and the End. By NICHOLAS BERDYAEV. Trans. by R. M. French. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952. xi-256 pp. \$3.50.

The Realm of the Spirit and the Realm of Caesar. By NICHOLAS BERDYAEV. Trans. by Donald A. Lowrie. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953. 182 pp. \$2.50.

Since the death a few years ago of "one of the greatest philosophers and prophets of our time," a Berdyaev Society has been formed to complete the publication and further dissemination of his works. Harper is now publishing several of these works, some of which were published in Europe during his lifetime, but not in English. *The Beginning and the End* is Berdyaev's "spiritual autobiography," giving us the influences that played upon him, the stages he went through, and the final general statement of his philosophy. *The Realm of the Spirit and the Realm of Caesar* is the last book he wrote; he left it in rough manuscript form, which had to be worked over and completed by his friends.

Fight the Good Fight. By ROBERT MENZIES. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1952. 173 pp. \$2.00.

Lord of All. By JOHN TREVOR DAVIES. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1953. 175 pp. \$2.00.

These are both small but meaty books of sermons by British clergymen. Dr. Menzies was minister to the Church of Scotland, Glasgow, for thirty-seven years, a well-known lecturer and preacher on both sides of the water. His series is subtitled "Enemies of the Christian Life—and How to Overcome Them." John Trevor Davies is an English preacher and lecturer at New College and King's College, of the University of London; he has a popular weekly column in the English *Christian World*. His book is subtitled "The Claims and the Gifts of the Living Christ."

A Spiritual Journey With Paul. By THOMAS S. KEPLER. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1953. 157 pp. \$2.00.

Forty meditations, written originally as a series for forty days of Lent in metropolitan papers, "in an idiom for the general reading public." The author is known widely for *The Fellowship of the Saints* and other fine anthologies.

E. H. L.

